INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY

MANUAL

OF

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

ON THE

INDUCTIVE METHOD

BY

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INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY

DIVISION III.—MAN AS NATURALLY RELATED TO GOD

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF MAN IN ITS RELATION TO GOD

THEOLOGY does not properly include any scientific study of the constitution of human nature as such. To that constitution its work is most intimately related, and psychology as well as philosophy must always be an important study to the theologian ; but it will conduce to clearness of thought and prevention of difficulties if we recognise the distinct scope of each of those studies. The fundamental facts as to man's nature which form the basis of anthropology, human physiology, and psychology obviously come into touch with our religious faith, and shape many of its most important convictions. But the relation of these obvious facts to religious faith does not imply a religious authority for any scientific theory of such facts. Doubtless in the New Testament, and perhaps in the later books of the Old Testament, we may observe indications of an elementary psychology such as existed among the

Greeks. But this, like the astronomy or cosmogony of the same age, is but part of the form of thinking and speaking common to the times, and in which the religious ideas in common with all other ideas must be expressed.

As theologians therefore we are not called upon to construct a science of man's nature, but simply to recognise the facts of that nature in their relation to God. By no other facts are the religious intuitions more powerfully called into play. In all the ages the great facts of our physical life, birth, growth, decay, pain, disease, death, have awakened thoughts of God and convictions of His presence and work. And so the facts of our spiritual being, intelligence, conscience, and all the moral elements are recognised as from God, and relating us to Him. The first element of our natural relation to God lies in our physical or material nature. We are not only like all other creatures the work of God, created by Him with the earth on which we live and its inhabitants, and out of its matter, "dust from the soil," but also as material beings are

Subject to the Laws of the Material World.

We have already seen how largely our religious emotions are awakened by the intuitive discernment of God as a being of power, wisdom, and goodness in the events and movements of material nature. This insight of religious faith takes on a new religious aspect, as I find myself the

conscious subject of this great realm of natural law, a weak and helpless creature in the grasp of the mighty forces which with resistless energy move on this great world. We are born as other animals through the operation of a mysterious law of life which governs the beginnings of all life on our planet. Our bodies are nourished by food, and reach their full maturity under laws of development such as govern the whole world around us. Under the same laws they are liable to disease, decay, and death, and to various forms of pain and suffering. Even the laws of physics and chemistry prevail here as elsewhere, contributing to our physical life, limiting its range of power, and exposing it to numerous accidents and dangers. The discernment of these various relations gives rise, like the discernment of all other wonderful provisions in nature, to a devout adoration of the God of nature, an adoration expressed by the psalmist in the oft-quoted words, "I will give thanks unto Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." But as it touches our personal conscious life, placing our rebellious will or our aspiring ambition under humiliating limitations, and subjecting us to pain and suffering, there arises a very different set of emotions and a deep religious faith apprehends an entirely new set of religious truths. We have these especially set forth in the contemplative literature of the Old Testament, the book of Psalms, the book of Job, and Ecclesiastes. And as our Lord condensed the entire moral teaching of the Old Testament into

such pregnant precepts as the golden rule and the two great commandments, so has he condensed the heaven-given answers to the cry of the human heart in the struggle of physical existence into a few words as remarkable for their poetic beauty as for their perfect religious faith. "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of heaven that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto his stature? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin; yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothe the grass of the field which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" The lesson of these and the following words from the Sermon on the Mount is addressed not to the speculative reason but to the religious faith. It is not an explanation of the problem and mystery of existence, and of our relation to the seemingly inexorable laws of nature, but rather an exhortation to the religious heart, opening thereby its eyes of faith to see a higher truth by which we may live. The lesson to faith which our Lord so beautifully

teaches is (1) that the right ordering of all nature is in the hands of God ; (2) that this order is a work of supreme wisdom ; (3) that it is guided by universal goodness.

This religious faith stands opposed to all materialistic and atheistic conceptions of the universe. God is in His world. "Our God is in the heavens ; He hath done whatsoever He pleased." It recognises the immanent presence and efficiency of God in all the operations of nature. As in the thirty-seventh chapter of Job, it looks out upon the whole face of nature and sees in all things "the wondrous works of Him that is perfect in knowledge." The very first element of this faith is thus a deep, abiding, pervasive conviction of the universal immanent presence and power of God in all things.

Again, it stands opposed to all pessimism, to all conceptions which look upon the world as partially or entirely a failure. To the eye of faith the world is not the work of a prentice hand ; its laws are not a series of experiments ; they represent no blind struggle towards the highest and best, they are the ordering of a perfect knowledge and a perfect wisdom. When this faith again is applied to our personal relations it produces, not the apathetic fortitude of the stoic, but the assured confidence of religious trust. "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all those things." It involves the element of submission to a wise

universal law, even when it touches us tenderly. Its reply to the tempter is: "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" Its conviction of the universal wisdom of the order of the world is such that it places this divine attribute at the very foundation of all things. "The Lord by wisdom founded the earth, and by understanding hath He established the heavens." This wisdom he possessed "in the beginning of His way before His works of old." The answer of faith to all doubt, to all fear, to all suffering, is thus a return to the idea of a wisdom far above our understanding, governing all our relations to the world in which we live.

But this faith includes a supreme goodness in the universal order as well as a perfect intelligence. The proof of this as of the other, our Lord draws from facts of universal experience. God feeds the ravens, clothes the grass of the field. "He opens His hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing." He finds the foundation of faith in facts of the lower nature; but He raises these to their full significance as teachers of our faith when He points out that we are not only creatures but children; hence with the highest claim upon the goodness which is so manifest even in the lower orders of nature —"Your Heavenly Father feedeth them."

But while man stands thus as a part of the physical world and subject to its laws he is on the other hand

The Offspring and Image of God.

"The belief that man is thus related to God seems almost coeval with the belief in God. We find it a part of the primitive faith of the Hebrew people as collected in the Book of Genesis. Paul quotes it from a Greek poet, and the historical study of religions shews that in some form of myth it has entered into the conceptions of almost all peoples. It is quite true that it frequently assumes a grossly materialistic form, but this is only part of a general degeneration which has affected this in common with other elements of religious faith developed by the mythical process. The common truth almost universally recognised is not because of its gross form of presentation altogether deprived of its vital influence as a part of the world's religious faith.

But this faith exists in its most highly developed form only in a purely spiritual religion. Such we have in the Book of Job where we read: "There is a spirit in man and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding." This idea is still further expanded by Paul when he describes the image of God after which we have been created as "knowledge," Col. iii. 10, and "righteousness and holiness of truth," Eph. iv. 24. This highest conception of the Divine Image in man resolves it into three elements, the intellectual (knowledge or understanding), the moral (righteousness), and the unity of the two (holiness of truth).

The consciousness of God is thus in the highest form of religious faith followed by a consciousness of relationship to Him, of the most spiritual character, a relationship embracing the very highest elements of our being, and asserting their unity with the essential being of God Himself. This entire unfolding of our spiritual life is purely religious and not speculative. It is not a mere attributing to God of the highest things which we find in ourselves, and thus the creation by our imaginations of a God in our own likeness; but it is first a recognition by the insight of religious faith of the presence of a God of wisdom, goodness, and power in all the world around us; then a recognition that this God is to us a God of truth, holiness and love; then still further a sense of unity with Him in whom we discern the perfection of our own being, which, alas, sin has converted into a sense of terrible separation; and finally a reconciliation which brings us back to our true relationship as children of the Eternal Father. The man in whose heart religious faith has put forth its full work will understand this, and will never make the mistake of confounding it with the shallow work of a myth-forming imagination. It is the spiritual discovery of a great fact, not a theory of the speculative reason, nor yet a fiction of religious imagination. It comes to religious faith with the most perfect conviction of certainty. The fundamental discovery thus made of our spiritual relationship to God carries with it a wide train of religious truths.

Our unity of nature with God combined with our dependence upon Him as His creatures places us in two fundamental relationships to Him, each involving a wide range of practical religious truth which unfolds itself to our faith in the experiences of human life. The first of these centres in our moral nature, but is at the same time religious inasmuch as it involves relationship to God. It is religious responsibility, responsibility to God. The second centres in our religious nature, but is at the same time moral inasmuch as it involves duty. It is that believing strength of soul which finds a Father's hand and loving care in all our way of life, and finds it at once our highest privilege and our bounden duty so to live in trustful love and humble submission toward Him who maketh "all things work together for good to them that love God."

A third field of religious truth opens up through the combination of our spiritual relationship to God, with the place which we occupy among those lower beings who are like ourselves the creatures of God. This too involves both a moral and we had almost said a religious side, had we not consecrated the word religion to express our relation to God alone. We are thus led to the subjects of the three following chapters; the moral government of God over man, the providence of God over man, and man's relationship to the other creatures of God.

Before passing from this study of our nature in its relation to God and His creatures, we must

pause for a moment to consider the relation of the two elements of this nature to each other. If these two elements are, first, a physical nature under universal natural law in common with all the creatures of God, and, secondly, a spiritual nature the image and offspring of God, in religious communion with Him as well as under moral responsibility to Him, then the diversity of these two elements and of their relations must seriously affect our religious and moral as well as our intellectual and sensuous consciousness, and by itself create a class of problems for our religious faith. The full significance of these problems will appear in our detailed study of our relation to God and the world in a religious life. Here we need only state the fundamental principle, that the material and physical is subordinate to the spiritual, and all natural law to the moral and spiritual. This certainly is the order which is in harmony with our religious feeling and faith; and it is as well the order which is affirmed by the facts of experience. The constantly increasing control of physical law which man as a spiritual being is winning for himself, is of itself a demonstration of this. If this is the true order then religious faith seeks in all physical suffering a higher interpretation than that of the physical law under which it takes place. The physical law itself may be justified by the wider good which it effects. The individual may find himself called to suffer under a law which, while to him it works present pain, in its wide range is

clearly beneficent. But he has failed to grasp the full truth regarding his personal suffering until he has come to see that "the light affliction which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, (the physical), but at the things which are not seen (the spiritual); for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

CHAPTER II

THE MORAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD OVER MAN

WE have already seen that our spiritual nature involves a twofold relation to God, (*a*) of moral responsibility, and (*b*) of religious faith. These two are inseparably united in all true religion inasmuch as religion includes all that belongs to man's relation to God. In the order of development both in the individual religious life and in the process of revelation at large, the moral side is first, and the full faith of fatherly care and love follows complete moral submission and reconciliation. It is thus that religion begins with fear of God, and only in its highest form reaches to the perfect confidence of reconciliation. This however does not imply that in the religion of godly fear there is no confidence, or that the religion of love excludes the sense of moral responsibility. The perfection of religion unites both in "love fulfilling the law."

The beginnings of moral responsibility either in the individual or in the race are such that they are scarcely matters of conscious observation or historical record. In our individual experience in Christian lands and under religious teaching, the

birth of conscience, and of religious feeling or idea of God, are not far separated in point of time, though probably to very few if any are they matters of distinct remembrance. The earliest remembrances of most men contain both elements as already occupying their place in conscious thought. Corresponding to this are the earliest historic records of all nations. All contain the elements of both moral responsibility and religion. The course of moral and religious development recorded in our Scriptures is no exception to this. They begin with the two ideas of God and moral responsibility. The first of Genesis is not the discovery of God and the founding of religion. Nor is the second of Genesis the discovery of right and the beginnings of divine moral law. Both these documents imply that men were already familiar with these conceptions and that in their language words expressive of them were already in existence. In the book of Genesis the account of the Fall, of Cain and Abel, of Noah and his generation and the Flood, and of the life of Abraham, all evince a clear sense of moral responsibility to a Divine Ruler and to His law of right.

The same thing appears in other nations, in that their earliest traditions make a Divine being their first king, the founder of their national order, and the giver of their law. But this is but a faint reflection of that definite responsibility of man to God's moral government, which stands out so distinctly in Sacred Scripture. This earliest

and universal sense of responsibility to a higher power is not a reasoned thing. Reason attests and confirms it, but it is before reason. It arises directly from conscience and religious faith in their united action. In fact the earliest action of conscience appears to be rather a sense of responsibility to a personal divine authority, than an abstract responsibility for right. Faith recognises God, and conscience recognises his authority and the two together create this universal sense of responsibility to the moral government of the Universe. The fundamental truth which is thus presented to our religious faith is the supreme authority of God, the Divine Sovereignty. This is not to be regarded as a conclusion of reason, something which follows from the fact that God hath made us, and that He has the right to do as He pleases with His own. Such a conclusion could not, we think, lay the foundation of a true moral order. Nor does the authority of God rest in any other way upon His power, as if might were right. To apprehend God in His moral nature, *i.e.*, by the united vision of faith and conscience, is to apprehend His authority and our obligation to obey Him. It may be thought that this doctrine of the direct apprehension of the authority or sovereignty of God is not consistent with that enforcement of this authority by rewards and penalties which is so prominent and important a part of the teaching of Scripture. Rewards and penalties serve a most important purpose both in the establishment

and maintenance of God's moral government. But they do so not by founding obedience upon fear or hope of reward, which would be no moral government at all; but by their continuous illustration and assertion of the principle of divine justice. "The Lord is known by the judgments which he executes." Rewards and penalties are but the continuous manifestation to us of the righteous character of God, and it is as a righteous God that we apprehend his authority over us.

"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,
A sceptre of equity is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom.
Therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee
With the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

However, we may interpret this passage, as referring to divine or human authority, it certainly founds authority in equity. Moral judgments as rewards and penalties thus become the revealing facts by which God is known as a holy and just God, ruling in all the earth, and through which we recognise His authority over us. This authority is an actual fact, which religious faith recognizes in its active exercise in the just judgments of God.

Side by side with this divine authority stands God's established moral order or law in the universe. The idea that certain things are right and others wrong, or that certain things are required by God and others forbidden, and that such requirements and prohibitions constitute His law, dates back beyond the beginnings of history. When there came to Abraham the revelation, "I am the Almighty God, walk before

Me and be thou perfect," there is already implied a known rule or standard of such perfection. Of such law we have clear evidence in the tradition of Noah and the second and third of Genesis, whether interpreted allegorically or literally, also imply such a rule. The peculiar work of Moses was the giving of law as the ordinance of God, and the high moral perfection of that law constituted the ethical superiority of the Hebrew over other ancient religions. Like other early forms of moral law it embodied ethical principles in the form of specific commands, and its decalogue is to this day pre-eminent as a comprehensive collection of such commands, unsurpassed in the breadth of its range, the simplicity of its statement, and the universality of its adaptation to the varying conditions of human society. It is supplemented by numerous specific judgments adapted to local and temporal conditions but embracing the same principles of equity; and also by instituted observances, religious, social, and political, useful for the maintenance of religious life, moral order, public health, and social convenience, and all acting as a means of the education of the people and their advancement to a higher moral status. But all appear as divine law, sanctioned by divine authority and enforced by divinely ordered rewards and penalties. All this implies among this people a faith in God's moral government of the most profound and influential character, a law of God for every aspect of their life, and a sense of re-

sponsibility attaching to all their doings. The form in which this religious faith and responsibility were expressed was suited to the age, and the conditions of human life, and to the stage of human development. Many of these forms served as types or shadows or preparations for the better things to come, and, when the more perfect things came, were destined to pass away. To maintain these preparatory forms or ideas in an advanced age would be superstition. But to lose sight of the fundamental principle which they expressed, would in any age be irreligion as well as immorality.

Under the teaching of Christ the form of moral law assumes a higher stage. It is no longer the regulations of the schoolmaster, but the broad principles of a court of equity. There is not even a specific re-enactment of the decalogue, though from its purely ethical character it can never grow old or pass away; but these ten commandments are all merged in one new one, "that ye love one another," and yet are in full force as specific examples under the general law. But it is unnecessary at this point to enter minutely into the question of detailed ethics or christian duties. A moral order or law of God over men is recognized as a part of religious faith.

The third point recognised by religious faith is the continuous enforcement of this law in human life. Two early traditions recorded in the book of Genesis present this aspect of religious faith very clearly. Cain is punished as an individual

for a particular sin. The antediluvian world is punished as a whole for universal corruption. The cities of the plain are an intermediate example of judgment upon a sinful community. It is not necessary to suppose that in each of these cases the judgment was altogether of a miraculous character, or independent of the operation of the laws of nature. The essential element is the recognition by religious faith of the direct presence of God in these facts of history, and of their moral character as judgments of God against sin. That this faith runs through the entire Old Testament is too evident to need detailed proof. In fact the earliest development of ideas in morals, religion and politics was of this communal character. Christianity first begins to exalt the individual and to develop his individuality and personality, especially along ethical lines. But while in this way our Lord's teaching corrects many of the sweeping conclusions of older times, and evolves new aspects of Divine providence which reveal the Father as well as the Moral Governor, the last book of the New Testament returns to that broad ethical interpretation of history which sees the judgments of a just God, in the overthrow of nations as well as in the sufferings at times of individual men. Ananias, Herod, and Elymas are examples of the individual, and the overthrow of Jerusalem and the downfall of the Roman Empire are national illustrations. Our Lord does not annul the teaching of the older faith; but corrects its

too harsh spirit by opening up to faith other aspects of God's dealings with the children of men. The stern course of a rigid justice is intermingled with the glorious mercy of a far reaching optimism bringing in a universal kingdom not only of righteousness but also of truth and love.

This entire conception of religious faith in the moral government of God over the world, the nations, and individual men, is one of those ideas by which religion lifts man to a higher dignity. The governor and the governed must in the very nature of this relation have life in common. He who commands and those who obey must understand each other. A common end must be possible to both, and a common enjoyment of that end is if not necessary at least probable. It is as made in the image of God and capable of entering into community of life with Him that we become the subjects of His Kingdom. We shall see presently how this natural relation passes into one of grace, as this providential government becomes mediatorial, and all authority in heaven and in earth is transferred to the Son, that through Him all things may be reconciled to God. But before we enter on this, another chapter must be written on the origin, nature, and results of sin.

CHAPTER III

THE PROVIDENTIAL CARE OF GOD OVER MAN

NO subject enters more largely into the world's religious faith than this. In pure faith, enlightened and inspired by the Spirit of God, it has given us the most beautiful, the most elevated, and satisfying religious ideas, such as have made so many of the Hebrew psalms the delight of men of every age and clime. And where faith has been mingled with human passion and obscured by the fancies of human imagination, here more than anywhere else they have run riot in fable and myth. The universal care of the Almighty Father, administered in justice and mercy, and in impartial and universal goodness and love, has passed over into the favour of countless subordinate beings, to each of whom some sphere of influence is assigned, and whose favour is to be propitiated in some special fashion. Next to its conception of God Himself a religion may be estimated by its doctrine of Providence. In fact its doctrine of Providence is the practical illustration of its conception of the character of God. In the Old Testament we have, as is natural, a very full expansion of the doctrine of God's providential

care first over all sentient beings, next over the whole world of mankind, and last and most fully expanded over his chosen people and elect men. This last subject would be easily misapprehended if it is not remembered that at this point the general doctrine of providence passes over into that of God's purpose and Kingdom for the world's salvation. The new Testament teaching carries the whole doctrine up to its final consummation of perfect unity of saving grace with universal providential goodness, and of both with the perfect justice of moral government. We have thus for Christianity a comprehensive and perfect doctrine of providence such as is afforded by no other religion. It is the providence of one God and Father of all who is over all, and who worketh all for good and right and truth according to the perfect counsel of His own will. The first element of this doctrine, God's tender care for all His sentient creatures, we have already largely considered under the head of our relation to the laws which govern the material world. The teaching of the Scriptures is that those laws are all ordered with a view to the provision for the wants of the sentient creation. Thus the changes of the seasons are a divine order and promise for the perpetual welfare of man and beast. So the psalmist describing all the works of nature after the order of the first of Genesis, makes each of them in turn conduce to the good of sentient creation. The springs which run among the mountains and into the valleys give drink to

every beast of the field, and by them the wild asses quench their thirst and the fowls of the heaven have their habitation. "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle and herb for the service of man; that He may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man; and oil to make his face to shine; and bread that strengtheneth man's heart." And so after describing the various orders of sentient nature he concludes thus; "These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayst give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest them they gather; Thou openest Thine hand, they are satisfied with good. Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled, Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." This is but an example of the way in which to the religious faith of ancient times, all the order of nature as they understood it, revealed the provisions of a tender care of God over all his works as of a Father over his children. This is not an interference with, or suspension of the laws of nature for special purposes of mercy, but such an original constitution of these as makes provision for the wants and well-being of all creatures.

The wide researches of our modern science in the field of natural law have not interfered with this faith. They have rather vastly strengthened it, by multiplying a thousand-fold the examples in which it is manifest to the devout investigator of God's works. But from this general providential care which man shares

in common with all sentient creation, religious faith rapidly ascends to the idea of a special providential care over man as God's creature made in His own image, and hence capable of standing in more peculiar relations to himself. This idea is founded in the provisions of general law, for it recognises man as sharing in the beneficent provisions and order, which supply the wants of all other creatures. But it introduces even into these a moral order. Hence seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night are not only an order of natural law ordered by God for the world; but also to religious faith a divine covenant of promise to man. As we pass from this order of nature for man to the order of men themselves as nations, and the bounding of their habitations, this again is the order of God; He "gave to the nations their inheritance, He separated the children of men and set the bounds of the peoples." The psalmist takes a still wider range when he says, "The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men, from the place of His habitation he looketh forth upon all the inhabitants of earth, He that fashioneth their hearts alike, that considereth all their works." These passages exhibit the general tone of the Old Testament as to this general providence of God. God's eye is upon all the children of men; none are hidden from his sight or forgotten before him; all are partakers of his universal goodness to his creatures. But his moral government and his

judgments are ever in the forefront, and one has only to read consecutively a few chapters from any part of the book of Psalms to see how largely the idea of moral government and justice predominates in the religious thought of that age as to the general relations of God to men. And yet this general severity of the Old Testament is here and there lightened by conspicuous examples of God's mercy to the outside nations, such as we have to Nineveh in the sometimes despised book of Jonah. Perhaps the secret of this narrower view of the faith of the ancients lay in the facts of the case. Their faith passed not beyond the facts of their experience; and in the midst of abounding wickedness, that experience was of judgment more frequently than of mercy. The exceptions prove that they could discern the mercy of God in the outside world as well as toward the chosen people. But whether without or within it is clear that to their faith mercy must have a moral foundation. It is a repentant Nineveh which experiences the divine mercy.

As might be expected the spirit of Christianity wonderfully extends this broader outlook of the older Hebrew faith. Our Lord Himself works under the limitation of a mysterious but conscious mission to the chosen people. Personally he was sent "to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." But while his present mission was particular, His spirit was universal. The Syrophenician woman was partaker of the benefits of his miraculous power, and the universal goodness of

God as displayed in the provisions of nature which he made a lesson for all his followers, and the parable of the good Samaritan are illustrations of the breadth of his loving spirit. But as he drew to the end of his mission to his own, and felt the pangs of final rejection, while the end was to be otherwise, there is something almost prophetic in the words of his bitter foes, "Will he go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?" And when once they came to him and "would see Jesus," he felt that "the hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." And so His final commission is "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation." The religious spirit of Christ himself is thus clearly proven to be broad as humanity, and in all His teaching whether of providence or of grace there is perfect consistency with this wide charity. The prodigal son as well as the elder son who abode in his father's house have each their place in the father's love. And consequently, as the spirit of Christ expands His teaching in the preaching of the Apostles, it soon becomes apparent that "God is no respecter of persons." The opening up of Christianity to the Gentiles was itself an order of Providence, a revealing event, which opened up to Christian faith the universality and impartiality of God's purposes, and of the administration of his moral government. And we have the final culmination of that faith in the magnificent view of the dispensations of the fulness of

time presented by Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians, in which he sees providence and grace united in Christ, and working all things in the history of all the ages to one grand consummation for the overthrow of sin, the salvation of men, and the reconciliation of the whole universe to God. In Christ to Paul's faith providence and grace are one; and both reach out in mercy and goodness to every creature of God.

Special Providence, Prayer and Miracle.

No study of our religious faith as to the relations of God to nature and to man would be complete which failed to recognize the belief of men in a special as well as a general providence over men, resulting in special answers to prayer, even to the extent of miraculous intervention of Divine power for that purpose. This is a faith quite distinct from, though related to, the appearance of the supernatural, as revealing God in His great forward steps in the evolution of the universe. Does the special hand and purpose of God reach thus, even to the least, by distinct acts as well as by universal and beneficent law? Rightly or wrongly, whether by true leading of the Divine Spirit or by human error, this has been the religious faith of past ages, and is embodied in the religious faith presented in our Scriptures. It is equally evident that the moderate and rational presentation of this faith which appears in Scripture, and especially in the

New Testament, has been distorted and exaggerated beyond the true mean of religious truth, and this in our own and past ages has often become superstition—that is, an irrational and unreal religious faith, a faith not only contradicting reason, but also untrue to actual fact. The study of this faith is, therefore, a matter of great practical importance, that we may recognize, define, and defend the true religious faith, as well as reject that which is false.

The questions thus presented are all questions of fact, and can be properly answered only by a strictly inductive examination. In this way we must first of all ascertain the exact religious faith of Scripture: what does it actually affirm on this point, either in its records of human experience or in its interpretation of that experience, whether as promise, as thanksgiving, or as exhortation? Again, what are the limitations, if any, of this faith? Are there moral or natural laws which God never transcends or transgresses in His special care over men and His answers to their prayer?

So also in the vindication of this faith, as of all religious faith, we must see first of all that it is founded on actual revealing facts, and that our interpretation of these facts is not only religious, but also reasonable, moral, and fitting.

We have already found in the Old Testament a doctrine of a special providence of God over His people, answering their prayers, and extending even to miraculous intervention on their

behalf. The most conspicuous examples are those of Joshua commanding the sun to stand still on Gibeon and the going back of the dial for Hezekiah. We need not enter into the difficulties of the exposition of these passages, or their reconciliation with modern science. For a satisfactory solution of the problems which they present we may now be without the requisite data. One thing is clear, they represent a high type of faith in special providence, answer to prayer, and special Divine intervention. This certainly was the religious faith of the Old Testament writers, whatever may have been the nature of the physical facts by which that faith was called out in these and other special cases. These historical examples are also in harmony with almost numberless promises and other forms of religious expression in the psalms and other Old Testament writings.

In the New Testament our Lord, we think, clearly and in direct terms inculcates the same faith in His teaching on prayer in the sermon on the Mount, "Ask and ye shall receive," etc.; in such words as "The very hairs of your head are all numbered"; in promises such as "It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak." The faith thus expressed is carried out in many passages of the Apostolic writings. St James gives us a conspicuous example in his directions as to prayers for the sick.

In the exercise of this faith there are, however, in the New Testament clearly defined limiting

safeguards. The first of these is the law of faith: "All things whatever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them," or "believe that ye laid hold of them, and ye shall have them," "they shall be to you."

Such faith as is here expressed is not a thing of chance or occasional exercise at the mere will of man. It is possible only to the soul living in communion with God, and in the spirit of deepest sympathy with and submission to His will. Those who have exercised this faith, and have received its joyful answer, will understand this, and also the fact that there are times when it cannot be exercised however much flesh and blood may so desire. Our Lord himself said, when the spirit was willing but the flesh weak, "Father, if it be possible." The law of faith is thus not a license to ask what we will after a carnal and human sort, but a limitation to the asking of that true faith which brings the soul into harmony with God.

It is almost the same thing to say that such intervention is again limited by the general, and to us often inscrutable, purposes and order of God. In many things God's purpose and order may include our asking and His special giving in ways which seem outside the ordinary course of nature. But to the devout soul which can thus ask and receive in the fulness of religious joy, this asking has in it always something of the sacred spirit of Gethsemane. St James tells us clearly that there is an unanswered prayer,

"Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." Even in the Old Testament the Psalmist had said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Another aspect of this law of limitation is thus the law of moral right.

But under this law of limitation, is this religious faith either inconsistent with facts, or in itself unreasonable? We think not.

1. Unless we are to disbelieve the testimony of all religious history, we must admit that religious men have experienced direct answers to prayer. And even apart from their testimony, there are facts in human history which religious faith insists on interpreting as special providences of God; and some of them of such a character that their special and even miraculous nature can scarcely be disputed. This aspect of the question is entirely one of evidence as to historic fact. We have no hesitation in accepting this evidence in many instances. In fact, we think there are few deeply religious men who have not had some illustration of the truth in their own experience.

Nor is such faith to us unreasonable. Only a transcendental or Deistic theory of the relation of God to His world excludes the possibility of such things as special providence and answer to prayer. If God dwells in and rules His universe as mind dwells in and rules the body, then this doctrine is not inconsistent with fixed laws and order in nature. It is only proof of the subtle perfection of the provisions and order of nature that, like the keys of a grand instrument of music, they are

every moment responsive to the will of the ever-present and presiding God. Nor is the intervention of man's will through prayer inconsistent with the perfection of the Divine purpose and order. It is but another example of that high moral order in which God calls us to use means that through the very using higher qualities may be developed in ourselves. Through labour as a means our physical strength is developed. Through thought and planning as means, our intellectual powers are exercised ; and so through a law of prayer, and through the evident though special exercise of Divine providence, men are kept in conscious touch with God Himself, and the very highest qualities of their spiritual being are called into full and continuous exercise. There is thus nothing unreasonable in this faith, nor is it in any way inconsistent with that perfection of the Divine order and character which our modern science of God's works has raised to so pre-eminent a place in our thoughts.

CHAPTER IV

THE RELATION OF MAN TO OTHER CREATURES

RELIGION regards man not only as God's creature but also as placed in God's world. It assumes for man a dominion over that world, but a dominion with responsibilities and duties as well as prerogatives. While in the world, he stands at the head of the material creation, and while his fellow-creatures are given him for his use and service, the religious spirit regards them all as creatures of God, thus holding through the Divine no mean relation to man himself. To say that they minister to his physical necessities, provide him food and raiment; help him in his toil, and augment his pleasures, is only to present the lowest and most obvious side of that relationship. The deeper spirit will find in the whole creation by which we are surrounded, a sympathetic environment engaged with us in the service of the Creator, and uniting as it were in a universal worship of the one God who is over all. Thus the very least of these works will command a reverent regard. There will seem to be nothing mean, nothing useless, nothing to be abhorred or scorned in God's world. Not merely our fellow-men, but other sentient creatures, will claim and receive

their just meed of kindly treatment and help, avoiding the unnecessary, and alleviating all necessary pain of life.

That this aspect of the religious spirit is not a mere refinement of modern sentiment is obvious from the history of the ancient religions. With some of them the greater objects of nature, and the more majestic forms of animal life, came to be regarded as the special abodes of the Divine Spirit, and even received worship as gods. But in all, the purer faith saw the work of Divine wisdom and power, and from them seemed to hear a universal anthem of praise to God. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."

"Praise ye the Lord from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights;
Praise ye Him, all His angels:
Praise ye Him, all His host.
Praise ye Him, sun and moon;
Praise Him, all ye stars of light.
Praise Him ye heavens of heavens;
And ye waters that be above the heavens.
Let them praise the name of the Lord;
For He commanded and they were created.
He hath also stablished them forever and ever:
He hath made a decree which shall not pass away.
Praise the Lord from the earth,
Ye dragons and all deeps,
Fire and hail, snow and vapour;
Stormy wind fulfilling His word:
Mountains and all hills;
Fruitful trees and all cedars;
Beasts and all cattle,
Creeping things and flying fowl.

Kings of the earth and all peoples ;
Princes and all judges of the earth ;
Both young men and maidens ;
Old men and children :
Let them praise the name of the Lord
For His name alone is exalted :
His glory is above the earth and heaven."

The complement of this wonderful hymn of the Old Testament is to be found in the words of the Master as he takes us to the lilies of the field and the birds of the air to teach us lessons of religious faith.

A far more difficult question for religious faith is our relation to higher spiritual beings. That such beings exist in other parts of the universe, and that they are visitors if not frequenters of our world has been the common belief of all the ages. We cannot place this faith on the same level with our faith in God as if he were one of these unseen beings, for by the insight of faith we see Him actually present in all His works. If he is not manifest to sense, His works are so manifest, and in His works by faith we discern Himself, with the same certainty with which the chemist discerns the force of affinity behind the visible changes which take place in his crucible or alembic. But of the works of unseen created beings we have no such visible certainty. We cannot certainly distinguish their works, if such there be, from those of men on the one hand or from those of God on the other ; nor have we any spiritual sense by which we can apprehend their presence in their works. So far as we know

they can only be directly recognised as they supernaturally assume material form, or as we are occasionally endowed with a supernatural sight, if such is indeed the case. The entire subject of the existence, the nature, the work of unseen spiritual beings, and of their relation to us and ours to them is thus shrouded in mystery. And yet the belief in such beings not only exists among men, but has been fruitful above all other fields of religious faith in giving free scope to imagination, conjecture, and even imposture. It is a field therefore in which the greatest care is needed to distinguish true religious faith from superstitious fancies.

Perhaps the most fully assured of all the elements of this religious faith is the continued existence of the spirits of men after death. If this is a fact, then there are somewhere in God's world a vast host of spiritual beings who were once men of like passions with ourselves, and who are thus most intimately related to us, our brother men, with knowledge of our life, even our parents, and our children, the objects of our personal affection. There are many things in our personal relations to these beings which are not matters of religion, for all religion must centre in God, not in ourselves or in our fellow-creatures except through God. The whole subject of spiritualism, even if it were not an imposture, is not a part of religion unless the spirits bring us a message from God. The faith in the immortality of the spirits of men does not, we think, rest in

visions, or clairvoyance, or the special sight of so-called media, but is a direct outcome of our entire moral and religious consciousness, as quickened, guided, and inspired by the Holy Spirit. The religious faith which believes with strong assurance that we are the image and likeness of God, that we are His children, cannot believe that this image was made to perish, that these children will not live to love and serve Him for ever. By whatever types and shadows God may first have led men up to faith in immortality, certainly in the matured Christian faith belief in immortality is founded in our deepest religious intuition. As our Saviour taught, it is because God is our God that we all live and shall live to Him. This faith certainly is found in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament it stands out pre-eminent, building upon the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and unfolding to us one of the most important chapters of our religious faith, which we shall hereafter consider under the heads of the intermediate state and the final consummation. In this faith we are united with all the saved and the holy of the past, the present or the future, in a Divine and glorious service which passes into eternity. But the religious faith both of the Old Testament and of the New apprehends also another class of unseen spiritual beings, some of them holy and with us fellow-servants of God, and some sinful and malignant. The origin of this belief it is difficult to trace, but it appears very distinctly at or after the captivity. Even

the translation of earlier passages may be doubtful, as the words used either have an original material significance as clouds, fire, winds, light, or are expressive of acts, as malaak and ἄγγελος, Messenger, and Satan, the accuser or enemy. But in the later books there can be no doubt as to their personal application to unseen beings, some good and others evil.

This belief undoubtedly passes into the New Testament, and appears in a very distinct form in the Gospel record of the miracles of Christ so largely described as the casting out of devils. The angels also appear very fully in the book of Revelation, and occasionally in other books.

It must be borne in mind that any view of the nature of these beings which may have prevailed in the Old Testament or in the New is no more a part of our religious faith than is their view of astronomy or geology. They are without doubt regarded as the cause of both evil and good to men. Obscure forms of disease are ascribed to their agency, which our modern pathology would otherwise account for. But apart from the forms of speech natural to the strongly pictorial imagination of the orientials, the nature of these unseen causes was, we think, as obscure to them as it is to the rigid scientific thought of our own day. The New Testament writers make no attempt to explain the nature of these beings, but use them simply as messengers of the revelation and providence of God towards men. They are "all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto

them who shall be heirs of salvation. If St Paul by the expressions "principalities and powers in heavenly places" and other like phrases, refers to such beings, he links us with them in a vast spiritual universe, over which Christ stands Lord and King; but even then he does not lift the veil of mystery as to their nature. This field of angels and demons becomes thus a dangerous field for the play of a religious imagination, easily lending itself to superstition, and with the related field of the spirits of the departed, has contributed more than any other to superstitious accretions to the pure Christian faith. Already in Paul's time this tendency had made its appearance, and he warns the Colossians against "the worshipping of angels" and "the dwelling on visions," or "on things which he hath not seen," placing these in the same dangerous category with the multiplication of or superstitious clinging to Jewish ordinances, to the neglect of Christ our Head. To Paul's experience these things were utterly without moral or religious "value against the indulgence of the flesh," Col. ii. 16-23. The true religious spirit of Christianity thus does not encourage us to surround ourselves with a multitude of unseen spiritual beings, depending on them for supernatural suggestions and help in the duties and difficulties of life, a course which must weaken rather than build up a robust moral and spiritual life. Nor does it depress us by the constant thought of malignant beings against whose superior power and machinations we are helpless,

a belief which again is far from conducive to moral and spiritual strength. It does indeed recognise the vast unfathomable mystery of the universe by which we are surrounded, and our relation to the unseen powers which dwell in that region of mystery, and it presents them in the forms commonly used in the Apostolic age by both Jew and Gentile as personal powers, a form doubtless susceptible of abuse, but not more so than the purely materialistic form used to-day. If the one may pass into superstition, the other just as readily lends itself to the substitution of blind mechanical force for spiritual will in all things.

But while thus recognising the mysterious powers of the universe in the midst of which we live, it places them all under the supreme control of God, and it makes our life a life hid with Christ in God, "angels and principalities and powers" being all made subject to him.

DIVISION IV.
HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY AND SIN

THE subject which now opens up before us must not be confounded with ethics. Ethics deals with truth as to the right and wrong of actions as determined by our moral judgments. Our subject, on the other hand, is strictly religious; it deals with an important aspect, perhaps the most important aspect of our relation to God. But it opens up the fact that our relation to God is not merely one of emotion and affection, but also one which embraces the whole range of our moral being as well. This moral side of religion or of our relation to God is expressed by the word responsibility. The word has a wide range of application to moral beings, expressing their relation to authority of all kinds, and becomes thus a most important term in ethics. Its religious application is at once the highest and most important, denoting as it does our relation to the supreme authority in the universe. The doctrine of responsibility is thus not so much parallel with ethical science as with jurisprudence, and, like jurisprudence, makes use of ethics as geology makes use of chemistry or physics. It brings conscience and moral law into the domain and service of religion.

The field of investigation thus opened up includes a large number of facts obvious in human consciousness and in the moral and religious history of mankind as well as in Holy Scripture. The nature of responsibility in general and of our responsibility to God in particular, the development of that responsibility by probation, the result of probation in sin, the outcome of sin in guilt, evil, depravity, and penalty, all these present themselves as matters of most careful investigation as they have been unfolded in the New Testament in the light of its Divine inspiration. The religious and moral insight of humanity has never reached a higher plane or expressed itself in such perfection as here.

CHAPTER I

RESPONSIBILITY

RESPONSIBILITY includes not only an inward or subjective sense of obligation, the *ought* of conscience, but also the real objective relation in actual facts corresponding thereto. This implies a real person obligated, a person or authority to whom he is obligated, and an adequate power by which the obligation may be enforced. It is not sufficient to say that conscience enforces the obligation. Granted that in a normally active conscience this is the case, how came the to be so? If we are the creatures of God, and He made conscience to enforce moral obligation, has He other means and ways of enforcing it? If the sense of obligation represents an eternal and immutable truth, a law of right, then evidently He has fashioned conscience according to that law, and in other things and in all things we may expect that the Creator of conscience will work according to that same law of right. Conscience thus becomes the witness for the Moral Ruler to whom and by whom we are held to the obligation which it asserts. God thus stands out in the very forefront of the obligation which conscience asserts, and the imperative of conscience becomes responsibility to God or a part

of our religion. The relation of conscience to all human obligation or responsibility is different. Conscience also supports and affirms this in so far as it judges it in harmony with right, but on the other hand it may reverse the obligation asserted or imposed by an unjust human law or authority.

Religious responsibility is thus the obligation by which we are held to God as our Creator to do His will revealed as the law for our life. Under this law man is held to answer for his acts, not only to his own conscience and to his fellow men to whom he owes duty, but supremely to God his Creator. Conscience is but the incorporation of this obligation in man's own nature and this incorporation is repeated in the entire constitution and history of the world in which man lives; in other words that world is governed and ordered by moral law. Conscience is thus the subjective side of responsibility; it compels us to accept as right the consequences of our own acts imposed by the law of right as well in their form of penalties as of rewards. Our deepest sense of truth says it is right, it ought to be.

Thus far the facts are so obvious both in our conscience and in the teaching of Scripture that detailed proof is unnecessary. But given the fact that responsibility to God truly exists on the basis of a Divine law or laws of right, we must next inquire

1. Are all men so responsible?

2. Are they responsible for all their acts, *i.e.*, at all times and under all circumstances?

3. Are they responsible only as individuals? or, are they also collectively responsible?

The first two of these questions may be answered together. The common verdict of our moral judgment does not hold all men to unconditional responsibility. An idiot is not held to be responsible, nor is an insane person, nor a child. The moral nature must be sufficiently developed and sound to enable a man to know the right from the wrong. Such moral nature Paul recognises in the gentile world, "in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them." It is only thus that he declares that "as many as have sinned without law shall perish without law," while "as many as have sinned under law shall be judged by law."

This last passage opens up a still further condition of moral responsibility. To a moral nature and capacity for moral action must be added a measure of light, of truth, of knowledge from without of that which is required by law. This knowledge, if not in actual possession, must at least be within man's reach. This principle of moral judgment is again recognised in all those Scriptures which measure increase of responsibility by increase of light, Matt. xi. 20-24; xxv. 14, etc., and especially John iii. 19, "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world,"

and John ix. 41, "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye would have no sin, but now ye say We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

Again our common moral judgment limits responsibility by ability. This limitation, like the previous one must be carefully guarded. As in the case of knowledge so in that of ability, responsibility extends to that which lies within our reach as well as to that in our actual possession, and to that which has been lost or forfeited through our fault as well as to that which is at present enjoyed. But the general principle of responsibility according to ability is clearly taught by our Lord himself in such passages as Luke xii. 4, 8, where it is associated with knowledge: "But he that knew not and did things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given of him shall much be required. And to whom they commit much of him will they ask the more." The careful form of expression here used guarding against abuse of the principle is very worthy of note. It is put in the positive form. The alleged absence of knowledge or ability does not prove no responsibility, but still responsibility grows with knowledge and ability; hence these are of its essence, and of these it would appear that our Lord did not regard any man as entirely devoid.

But given these three conditions of responsibility, a moral nature, knowledge and ability, the next question is, How does responsibility attach? Does it belong only to the

individual person? or can it be attached to a body or society of men collectively, or even to the whole race as a race? The answer of history and of common moral judgment seems to be that responsibility may be attached to all these, but in a different manner in each case. There can be no question that, given the foregoing conditions, each man is held to personal and individual responsibility for his acts, even though those acts be done in connection with others. This again is the verdict of the common sense of right and the clear teaching of Scripture. In the Old Testament such a passage as Ezek. xviii. throughout is very emphatic: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." In fact, the teaching of the passage is that no form of hereditary responsibility can override individual responsibility. In the first and second chapters of Romans we have also a very clear assertion of the responsibility of all classes of men, including those from the Gentile world, and this extends "to every soul of man that doeth evil" (Rom. ii. 9). "Their being without law does not exempt them" (ver. 12), for (ver. 15) "they show the work of the law written in their hearts." There is in this passage certainly the strongest assertion of a universal individual responsibility of all classes of men upon which the eternal destiny of each man individually is made to depend. God "will render to every man according to his works" (ch. ii. 6; so also Gal. vi. 5, 7, 8, 9).

But in addition to this supreme individual

responsibility there is also clearly set before us in the moral judgment of mankind a responsibility which attaches to men in solidarities, *i.e.* as families, communities, and as an entire race, both contemporaneous and successive. This is very fully recognised in Scripture in the case of Sodom, Gen. xviii. 23-32; of family succession, Ex. xx. 5, 6, and xxxiv. 7; Num. xiv. 18, 33; Deut. iv. 40; Ps. xxxvii. 25, 26; Jer. xxxii. 39. Nor is the teaching confined to the Old Testament, for our Lord Himself clearly recognises this continuity and solidarity of God's great moral judgments, when He says to the Jews of His own day, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers," "that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of Abel the righteous unto the blood of Zachariah, the son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation."

This doctrine of a common responsibility, which is thus continued by our Lord from the Old Testament into the New, and which is generally recognised in human jurisprudence as well as by common conscience, receives its fullest expansion from St Paul in the fifth chapter of Romans 12-19. This passage, which we need not quote *in extenso*, as it will be familiar to all our readers, gives us the most complete and direct statement of the historical outcome of the principle of a common responsibility or moral unity of the race. The race is,

1. One in its moral development. The good or evil of one blesses or harms the whole. The penal consequences of the first sin follow the whole race.

2. These penal consequences imply common responsibility. In proof of this Paul cites the fact that it has taken effect even where individual responsibility was not fully developed. Children die, even though not capable of personal sin.

This moral constitution which unites the race in responsibility for the consequences of acts of its members is not an unsupported dogmatic teaching of Scripture. Our moral and religious consciousness assents to its justice as soon as we consider its twofold range of action. We cannot claim its numerous blessings without submitting to its disadvantages; and a healthy religious spirit accepts it as a righteous and beneficent ordinance of God, which, in imposing more onerous because wider responsibility, by that very fact exalts us to a higher and richer moral life. All the highest and most godlike virtues of which we are capable arise out of the solidarity of moral constitution. Nor is this doctrine one of dogmatic teaching or religious faith alone. It enters into the whole experience of human life. In the family parents and children are bound up in this unity of moral life and responsibility. The village, the patriarchal tribe, the city state, the nation all afford conspicuous examples of its practical action. Jurisprudence recognises it in

our law of inheritance. We are therefore prepared by the facts of history and almost daily experience to accept Paul's statement of this law of solidarity in moral responsibility, the justice of which is recognised by the common consent of mankind.

The law has however its limitations, which must be carefully considered in its interpretation and application.

1. It must not be so interpreted or extended as to supersede or destroy individual responsibility. In fact it does not in itself constitute a distinct and separate kind of responsibility. Communal responsibility can exist only on the basis of individual responsibility. There must first of all be a responsible head, father or king, in whose individual responsibility the common responsibility centres. The doctrine is not one of a company responsibility in which no one is individually responsible. It is rather a mutual responsibility, in which each one is responsible not for himself alone but for all his fellows as well. Personal responsibility is thus not weakened or diminished, but vastly increased by this solidarity of moral constitution.

It recognizes, as any view of responsibility must, if true to fundamental principles, that there are degrees in this unity of moral life, extending from the head, who bears the weight of the whole, to the infant member, whose personal responsibility is yet to be. But in the corporate whole this infant is to be trained to take his

place and share. The unity of moral and social life in all its phases becomes a training school, in which individual responsibility is to be cultivated until it reaches its full measure of moral manhood.

2. United responsibility does not determine individual and eternal destinies. The final issue of each human life is "according to his works." "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is thus not so much an essential element of all moral responsibility as an order of God's moral government of man, under which our individual moral responsibility to God is both developed and exercised. Hence all common or united moral responsibility must be taken as subsidiary to, and limited by, the essential principles of individual responsibility. Such a passage as Ezek. xviii. limits the application of Ex. xx. 5, 6, as in fact that passage itself suggests the limitation. Individual responsibility is thus alone final and supreme. Hence, when we come to study probation, we shall find that it moves from the collective to the individual form of responsibility, and the common responsibility at last ends in that individual judgment in which, notwithstanding our mutual and moral relations, where "no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself," "everyone of us shall give account of himself to God."

CHAPTER II

PROBATION

PROBATION is a term closely related to responsibility, and has a similar extension of application to things human and divine. It differs from responsibility, in that it denotes not a permanent but a temporary relation. It is the first stage of the relation among moral beings in which ethical obligation is brought into exercise. Like responsibility, it implies authority on the one side, and subjection to that authority on the other. When applied to the relations of God and men, it is thus a part of religion as well as an ethical relation. It may be defined as the initial stage of responsibility, in which, by his own moral acts, a man acquires moral character—*i.e.* a record of moral good or evil, and the corresponding moral desert. It begins with the conditions of moral responsibility—viz., a moral nature, some knowledge of duty, and some ability for its discharge, and it ends with a judgment and its awards. It is a process which moves forward, not under natural, but under moral law. It is not a development proceeding unconsciously under the influence of environment, but a moral effort consciously striving for its end. This end is the

approval of the superior authority, the "Well done, good and faithful servant." It does, indeed, also promote development of moral power and perfection of moral nature, but this is collateral rather than primary, a purpose of God rather than of man. It is thus that process by which moral beings make moral goodness their own. Such moral goodness must be clearly distinguished from natural goodness. Natural goodness is of essence or being; moral goodness, of character or life. Natural goodness is that which is bestowed with the original gift of being, or arises out of its growth or development; moral goodness, or virtue, is that created by the act of will, and which gives effect to natural goodness in the face of contrary forces. The one is goodness by the constitution of nature, the other by the choice of will.

Probation is thus founded in moral nature, and implies its exercise. But it is only the beginning of such exercise. Moral action may begin with a probation, but it does not end with it. God is eternally and immutably good by act of will as well as by essence of being. His goodness is not bestowed, nor does it stand only in an immutable necessity of being, but it is the fountain-head of all natural goodness. It is goodness in and through conscious will, and hence truly moral goodness. But it had no beginning in act of will, and hence is not probational in its character. So in man, moral goodness may become what we sometimes call

a second nature, so confirmed that choice and will are no longer matters of effort. By this perfection moral goodness does not cease to be moral, but rises to the highest perfection of moral character, approaching nearer in our degree to the likeness of God Himself. The essence of moral goodness lies not in the opposition to be overcome, but in the willingness with which we act. Opposition may test and measure this goodwill, but its absence does not diminish or destroy it. And if it has grown so great that it overrides all opposition without effort, its moral worth is not thereby annulled, but rather proved to be all the greater.

But while probation thus belongs to moral beings, it belongs to such beings in their imperfection. It represents the incipient and imperfect stage of moral life, and is naturally terminated as that life advances towards perfection.

Probation has thus its negative, as well as its positive, side requiring definition.

1. On the positive side, as we have seen, it involves all the conditions of moral being, or the possibility of doing right.

2. On the negative side, it involves that imperfect stage of moral being in which wrongdoing is still a possibility.

3. On the positive side, it involves responsibility to recognized authority and law.

4. On the negative side, to meet its moral imperfection, this responsibility may be rendered effective by special tests, and rewards or penalties.

Probation is thus not a state of moral indifference. There may be a basis of natural goodness making right more easy. Or there may be evils in the nature opposed to the right. But if, in either case, these are such as to exclude the possibility of the alternate choice, then such a being is not in a state of probation. He is either good or bad, whether by nature or by choice, but he is no longer in that incipient stage of moral being implied in probation.

It is not necessary for us here to discuss possible forms of probation as applied to men or to other orders of moral beings. The business of the inductive theologian is with the forms of probation under which man stands related to God, and which have been clearly revealed both in the moral and religious history and consciousness of the race: it is his work to inquire

1. Whether men have stood, or do now stand, in a relation of moral probation before God?

2. What was originally the nature of this probational relation?

3. What have been its outcome and changes, if any?

The answer to these questions is an answer of facts, manifest in human consciousness or in the records of history.

Human Probation a Fact.

The religious consciousness of humanity bears universal testimony to the fact that man stands in a probational relation before God. The belief

in a judgment after death, and awards of reward or penalty as the result of such judgment, has entered into all developed religions known in human history; and these both involve and are part of a probational system. We can trace this belief back far beyond the time of Moses into the earliest historic traditions, and even prehistoric myths, of the race. The earliest records of Egyptians, Babylonians, Aryans and Semites all give evidence of such belief. Turning to the Scriptures, as pre-eminently the record of Divine Revelation, we find, first of all, an original probation of man at the very foundation of his moral history, with certain clearly stated conditions and results.

Again, we find a gradually unfolding present probation under the world's Redeemer, with conditions revealed from time to time with the world's moral progress, and results to be reached at a final day of judgment. This faith enters into the very essence of the religion of the Hebrew people, and is largely extended and perfected by the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. It is thus not a temporary phase or stage of religious belief, but one of its fundamental and abiding elements, to which Scripture and history, reason and conscience, are united in testimony.

The doctrine as presented in the New Testament as a part of the Christian religion includes a primitive probation of the first human beings, and in them of the race, a progressive probation of a

sinful race in various temporary forms and measures of light and opportunity, together with the central probation of a chosen people, and finally a universal probational dispensation for the world's salvation in Christ.

The doctrine of probation thus not only unites religion with ethics in a general providential government of men by God, but in its historic outcome leads us to all other elements of the Christian religion, which in its entire belief as to the relations of man to God proceeds upon the basis of the unity of ethics with religion. Henceforth our studies will thus be more than ever limited to the Christian system and Scriptures.

The Primitive Probation.

In the moral history of the race as presented in Scripture probational test and law appear in three forms:

1. Representative or symbolic acts, prescribed as of Divine authority, and embodying or signifying important elements of moral and religious duty. Even in the New Testament we have two such probational acts prescribed as badges of the Christian profession, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Under the Mosaic law a large use was made of this form of probational discipline.

2. Definite concrete acts of moral and religious obligation, founded, not simply on authority, but upon moral and religious reasons clearly apprehended, *e.g.* the Ten Commandments.

3. General principles, the application in concrete act being left to the individual moral judgment and conscience, *e.g.* the Christian law of love.

These several forms of probational law correspond to stages of moral development, and belong respectively to the infancy, the advancing growth, and the moral maturity of the race. They are in the same way successively applicable to each individual. The child under authority may conscientiously observe forms of moral and religious life before it understands reasons. The growing youth may understand the moral reasonableness of particular duties before he is able to apply general principles to all new circumstances of life for himself. So in the world's history, prescribed forms or even symbolic acts play a most important part in moral life, even to-day calling out and awakening conscience. The order is, first, a simple prescribed act; next, a definite moral commandment; finally, the universal principle of "faith working by love."

The Biblical account of the original probation of the race is contained in the second creation document of Genesis, chapters ii. and iii. That this document is very ancient, and that in various forms it substantially existed among various ancient people is now well known. How it originated we do not know. We may not be certain as to its literary form or character. It may be history, it may be allegory; we are here concerned with it only as embodying a view of

the moral and religious beginnings of the race held by the religious faith of men from very early times, embodied in the Hebrew Scriptures, and accepted by Paul, if not by Christ Himself, and incorporated by Him into the Christian presentation of man's moral relations to God. Its literary form and construction are subordinate; we are concerned with its religious teaching.

1. It places the original probation of man in the observance of a simple symbolic ordinance. "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There is indeed reference also in the account to another tree, the tree of life, which seems to represent the reception from God of the gift of life, but access to this tree is also conditional on the previous probational law. There appears thus a remarkable parallel between these two trees of the primitive document and the probational ordinances first of the Mosaic and then of the Christian dispensation. The tree of knowledge, circumcision, baptism, all set forth the ethical side of relation to God—separation from sin. The tree of life, the passover and the Lord's Supper, represent the religious side—the gift of life from Him.

It may be objected that we are assuming here that the account in Genesis is literal history. This is not necessary, though we are by no means prepared to admit that it has not a good historical

foundation. But even if we take it as an allegorical representation of the primitive ethical development of the race, we must admit that it sets forth these and other ethical facts as belonging to that development, and it is the facts with which, following St. Paul, we have to deal. These facts may be summarised as follows: That the moral development and primitive probation date back to the beginning of the race; that this probation and development were both effected through the physical, things visible leading to and expressing the spiritual; that its outcome at the beginning of the race was a universal fall into sin; and that this fall affected not the individual alone, but through him the race. Are such facts reasonable in view of what we know of the moral nature of man?

1. The employment of a symbolic ordinance appealing to the outward senses as the test of probation is fitted to the moral infancy of the race. It is the awakening of conscience, as from the innocence of childhood, to the simplest and most elementary form of moral obligation which is here set forth. Man is thus permitted to build from the very foundation the structure of moral character. God does nothing for him which he can do for himself. Definite moral laws and universal moral principles will all come to him in due time as the reward of probational fidelity and experience; or, failing that, as the gift of a Divine remedial provision working along the same lines of moral law. Any other constitution would

have deprived man of something of the glory of moral being; and the possibility, or even the certainty, that through sin some would ultimately fail would not justify God in depriving His creatures of this glory.

The subjective conditions of the primitive probation are thus those of a child, and so, our Lord teaches, must the new probation, we might even say all probation, begin. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

2. The account in Genesis presents also the objective conditions or environment of the primitive probation as embracing temptation as one of its elements. Temptation is an appeal from without to induce us to do wrong. In this case it implies a higher and a lower self, and that virtue lies in the assertion of the higher self as against the lower or as governing it. The law or test of probation gives a concrete form to this assertion. When it says, "Thou shalt not eat," it requires that appetite be subordinate to Divine authority. But the temptation lies in the calling up, the incitement of the lower nature by an active agent from without represented in this case by the serpent. If it be asked, is this reasonable? is it consistent with Divine justice and goodness that such temptation should be permitted to intervene in the primitive probation of an infant race? the answer may be gained from Paul's statement. Under a righteous administration of probational conditions temptation is limited. "There hath

no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Temptation may be needful for the proper development through probation of our moral nature, and hence is assigned to man as a moral agent as his "common" lot, but always in the justice of God reasonably limited to his ability. The moral necessity for temptation is set forth by Peter; "Though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief by manifold temptations, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth though it be proved with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ." So also James i. 2-4. Temptation endured is a helper to moral and religious perfection. It is therefore not inconsistent with either God's justice or goodness.

3. The process and result of the primitive probation are also set forth in Genesis, and are again in accord with universal human experience and with moral and rational principles. The narrative is wonderfully picturesque and has been variously interpreted, but no form of interpretation can eliminate the principles of moral and religious truth which it contains. It corresponds to the process of temptation, sin, and fall in every individual man. It gives us:—

(*a*) The presentation or suggestion from with-

out of the forbidden act as an object of natural desire.

(*b*) It does this in the face of the conscious knowledge of the prohibition, thus converting innocent natural desire into temptation to sin. So Rom. vii. 9, "When the commandment came, sin revived (woke into life), and I died."

(*c*) It presents the suggestion of unbelief or disbelief of the truth, rectitude or goodness of God in making the prohibition.

(*d*) This is followed by an inward yielding to the suggestion, accepting the word of the tempter before that of God.

(*e*) Next comes the act which outwardly breaks the commandment.

(*f*) Next follows the subjective judgment of conscience, a sense of moral degradation and guilty fear.

(*g*) Finally the probation is judged, the sentence is pronounced and the penalty enforced.

In the process as thus set forth there are four stages :—

1. Simple temptation. There appear in consciousness the suggestion of the sinful act and the light of the command. This does not involve any sin.

2. Reasoning with temptation. God's law is reasonable, holy, just and good. But the reasoning process gives opportunity for growing desire, and hence danger.

3. Hesitation and doubt. Uncertainty of faith

and of will. This is the beginning of all sin. (Rom. xiv. 23; John iii. 18.)

4. The completion of the transgression in the outward act (James i. 15). Even at the third step there is possibility of return, but at the fourth the final record is made, and that which is done cannot be undone.

The account of the primitive probation given in Genesis is thus a perfectly rational one, and, whether construed literally or allegorically, it contains the elements of ethical truth which must of necessity have entered into man's moral history.

The same may be said of the relation of sin to physical death. This too has entered into the universal moral and religious conscience of the race, and however brought about by physical law, is thus truly united to the higher moral law as a part of God's moral order for man. The extension of the results of the primitive probation to the whole race, and the moral order under which it takes place will be considered under the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

SIN

If the view which we have presented of the nature of moral responsibility as our relation to God, and of probation as a divine method or order for the exercise of that relation be correct, then sin as the outcome of probation is a matter which belongs to the domain of religion as well as of ethics. And so the universal religious consciousness of humanity has testified. Men are not only convicted of their sin in their own conscience as a wrong act, but they also on its account tremble before God that it is offensive in His sight, a transgression of His law to be rewarded by His just penalties. In the lower stages of human development this religious consciousness of sin is even more prominent than the purely ethical ; though we think the two are never entirely separated, as both are founded in ultimate elements of our spiritual being as well as in eternal realities for which that being was fitly created.

Sin has thus in its nature two aspects ; on the one side it affects our religious faith and emotions as a violation of God's law ; and on the other, it affects our conscience or moral nature as moral

evil, badness, or wrong. In the second aspect, we judge of it as an act in its moral nature, as we might judge of a thing as ugly or beautiful; in the first we carry the act up into its relation to God and His holy law. In its full definition sin is:

1. Transgression of God's law and amenability to the penalty of that transgression. This is its objective side, 1 John iii. 4, "Sin is lawlessness," *i.e.* the violation of law. And Rom. v. 13, "Sin is not imputed when there is no law."

2. That which arises out of the moral nature of that transgression, viz., guilt. This includes:

(*a*) The inherent badness or evil of the act as opposed to the eternal, immutable, and perfect right and good.

(*b*) Desert of, and hence righteous liability to the penal consequences, whether imposed by a positive law or inherent in the very nature of the sin, making it its own punishment.

(*c*) The inward response of conscience to this judgment acknowledging the act as my act, its evil as my sin, and its liability to penalty as my guilt.

The sense of sin as fully developed in our consciousness thus plainly indicates that it is not an abstract quality of action in its moral nature, but that its relation to God and to religion is as definitely affirmed within us as its wrong. These several aspects of sin appear very clearly in the terms used in the Old Testament to denote sin. Probably no language is richer than the Hebrew

in this respect, indicating the very full development of the moral and religious consciousness of this people. It is:

1. *Avon*—a twisting or perverting, wrong perverting right.
2. *Raa*—a breaking or destroying.
3. *Sheker*—a weaving, *i.e.* falsehood, fiction.
4. *Aven*—breath, emptiness.
5. *Shagag*—wandering, error.
6. *Pesha*—rebellion against authority.
7. *Rasha*—lawlessness.
8. *Asham*—a thing condemned, under penalty.
9. *Amal*—toil, misery, suffering.
10. *Chattath*—a missing of the mark; *i.e.* the true end or reward of life.

A large number of these expressive terms are paralleled in the New Testament, and especially by St Paul in his terrible indictment of human sin in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. A few of these will show us how completely the ethical conceptions of the Old Testament have been transferred to the New, where they are brought out even more fully in the clear logical definition of the Greek language. Thus ἀδικια expresses the injustice of sin, ἀσεβεια its godlessness, πονηρια and κακια its badness, ἀτιμια its shamefulness, ἁμαρτια its missing of the true way of life, ἀνομια its lawlessness, ἀσυνετος its folly, and several terms its utter selfishness. Of these the generic term for sin is ἁμαρτια. It includes both the moral and the religious aspect. It implies not only a right, but a right order or

way of life ordained of God, and sin is departure from this. It is thus in St Paul almost synonymous with ἀνομια in St John, which he uses once as a comprehensive definition of sin. The νομος or law expressed the true, the right relation of things. This relation is founded by God as the Author of the universe, and springs from the perfection of His Being. It finds expression for men in His Word, and is His holy will. Sin breaks this, contradicts it. It is wrong relation.

First of all, in its commission it reverses the moral law within. By that law all the lower self, all motives which spring from the senses, the appetites and selfish desires, should be subject to the control of reason and conscience. But sin overthrows this law, since in its commission we yield to the lower nature, influenced from without, in opposition to conscience, reason, and religious faith.

Again, sin as a completed act places me in a wrong relation to God, or to my fellow-beings, or to both. The moral law within which requires the supremacy of conscience, is made by God as the counterpart of the moral law without which prescribes and enforces my right relation to all other beings. A violation of the moral law within, coming forth as an objective act, puts me out of right relations to the universe. It leaves me in a permanent state of wrong. To this conscience bears its most emphatic testimony, and history, as interpreted by religious faith in all the ages, confirms its assertion. The hereafter of the perfect

man is peace, but the hereafter of the wicked shall be cut off.

Sin is thus very far from being a mere negation, a failure to reach a good. It is not the mere absence of right relation, it is positive wrong relation. It is thus a reality, and as such a new thing as well as a wrong thing, a thing not made by God, but our own doing—we have done the positive wrong. It does indeed originate in the failure to assert our true selves, our higher nature in the direction of our life, but that very failure sets loose lower forces which land us in the positive wrong. These forces are not in themselves evil. They have their right function as servants. In the lower orders of creation they may guide and rule the life to its true ends. But man's true life is a higher life, a life of moral right and religious harmony with God. To him the lower life, uncontrolled by the moral and religious, is a wrong life, a transgression of moral law. Into such a life he passes by a fall from his true relations and prerogatives as a moral being. Conscience and religious faith abdicate the supremacy which belong to them. The sin is thus in the spirit and not in the flesh. Only a moral being can commit sin. These considerations exclude every view which makes sin a necessary result of our nature or circumstances. It is, as our conscience and religious nature both assert, our act originating from our inmost self, our perversion of God's good.

The Results of Sin.

We come now to consider sin in its effects, first upon the individual sinner and then upon the race. We have already seen that in its moral badness sin is guilt, *i.e.* desert of penalty. Penalty is deserved under moral law, and it may be inflicted by special just provisions of a moral government. But, as we have already found natural law subsidiary to moral law, and in God's government, He, as the Author of both natural and moral law, may make sin its own penalty in its natural consequences or results. The earlier theologians, interpreting the language of Scripture literally, were disposed to make the penalty of sin an infliction *ab extra* after the analogy of human government. Later views are disposed to fall back upon natural law as the method of the penalty of sin. In either view the order is of God and according to the perfection of his moral nature.

The immediate subjective result of sin is, from the moral side, loss of the sense of right accompanied by remorse of conscience. The corresponding result on the religious side is loss of confidence toward God, which becomes positive fear, the dread of deserved penalty. The two taken together constitute a degradation of the entire moral being. The confidence of our moral nature, our sense of rectitude with God and man, the strength of holy boldness, the consciousness of right relation is gone, or rather is replaced by a consciousness of wrong and guilt. Our very glory

has become our shame, our strength is now our weakness, and the courage of the upright has become the terror of the guilty; our entire spiritual being feels the wound of sin.

But these results of sin are not only immediate and sensible, but also permanent and affecting the very constitution of our moral being. By even a single act of sin, the power of conscience and religious motive which is the basis of human freedom and of our power to do right as moral beings, is greatly weakened if not entirely destroyed. The moral judgment is darkened and confused; the impulse of fear which takes the place of the sense of righteous obligation is devoid of its spiritual strength as well as of its dignity; and the true moral power of freedom of will is gone. At the same time all the passions whether animal or social which relate us to the world about us and naturally to our fellow men, and which were ordered of God to be governed and guided by reason, conscience and loving obedience to God, assume abnormal control and speedily become inordinate in their power. These are now our masters and our life is a real bondage to their service.

The strength of the will which concentrates the power of our being in action is in like manner perverted. Its energy is expended in the gratification of the passions, and its power to resist or overcome its fellows in the struggle for existence which ensues in this sinful life takes the place of the Divine freedom in the strength of which

it once did right. The whole life thus becomes centred in a lower form of being. We cannot call it animal, though it is largely that, for it is separated from the mere animal by a higher intelligence, as well as by many forms of social affections which distinguish us as human beings. But the centre of life, that which occupies the thoughts and commands the energies, is no longer God, right, truth, beauty, goodness, but self, sense, pride, ambition, anger, revenge, and such like. The picture given by Paul in the first of Romans is not one whit too dark to describe the moral condition into which sin leads humanity, both the individual and the race. It may be expressed in one word, a moral ruin.

Depravity

is the word employed in theology to designate this irreligious and immoral condition, this perversion of a godlike nature within and this entire prostitution of life into which sin leads. Depravity is not a mere return to an animal or brute life. The fierce rage of the lion, the stealthy hunt of the tiger, the cunning of the fox are all mere instincts. They do not imply the setting aside of right, of truth, of goodness, the choice of evil for good. Only a moral being can be depraved. To prove then that the human race or the individual man is depraved, it is not sufficient to show that they are subject to animal passions. There must be evidence of the higher nature and

of the possibility of the higher life. Of the beastliness, the ferocity and the other evil passions of humanity there is alas no lack of evidence. Paul needed only to describe that which lay all about him in the Roman world to exhibit this in its utter vileness. Was this vileness of the Roman world only a stage in the moral development of humanity towards higher things? Is the life of China to-day only an example of imperfect or arrested moral development? Can this be said even of the inhabitants of Africa or Polynesia or the aborigines of America? We think not. Paul found even in Rome the wrecks of better things, a law written in men's hearts, here and there works of moral law which prove them moral beings. It is because that they knew God, and knew the ordinances of right and Divine judgment against sin that he adjudged them wicked and not merely unfortunate. The evil state of humanity is thus proved to be a real depravity and not a low stage of moral development.

What thus appears from the observation of humanity in various ages and countries, is corroborated even by ancient myth. In almost every land there are traditions or fictitious ideals of a golden age in the past, and hopes of a better life in the future, proving that Paul was not mistaken in his judgment of humanity as sinning against light. But the strongest evidence of depravity comes from each man's own consciousness. This has never been more perfectly described than again by Paul in the seventh of Romans, ending

in that terrible cry of a heart struggling against its own corruption and longing for better things. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" Nor was this moral struggle with an evil self the work of sin, the experience of Paul alone. Every good man has felt the same, and the common verdict of moral and religious consciousness is that human depravity as the outcome of sin is universal. Such is Paul's conclusion as expressed in the third of Romans, not only that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," but that "all are under sin," and the words which he quotes, not to prove but to express this, describe depravity as well as acts of sin. It is thus the common faith of Christianity that sin and depravity are universal in the human race. There may be very wide diversity of opinion as to the extent of this depravity, and the use or definition of the word total in this relation; but only a very small minority refuse to admit the fact. Even with these it is a question of theory as to the moral condition of infancy rather than of fact in their own moral and religious consciousness. We think every man who with Paul has passed up into the higher Christian consciousness of redemption from sin will with Paul admit the fact not only of his personal sin and guilt but of his depravity. Certainly the fact of the universality of depravity as well as of sin is most clearly recognised in the New Testament as well as in the Old, and the entire system of Christian re-

demption is based upon it. Granted that sin appeared at the very foundation of the race, and as the result of its primitive probation, how came sin and its most terrible result, depravity, to be thus universal?

Sin in the Race.

We have already referred to the solidarity or unity of the race in moral responsibility. The foundation of that solidarity lies in the relation of parents and children and the constitution of the family. The physical law associated with it, and through which the moral principle takes effect, is the law of heredity. But the moral law of solidarity has a much wider range than this physical law of heredity. In the first place the family, as the fundamental moral and social group of human beings, extends into tribes, cities, nations, and other forms of united life. Again in these, purely moral forces arise, binding individuals together in a common life. Example, social affection, education, common interests, emulation, conflict of interests, and many other forms of moral force spring into existence, by which men influence each other, become involved in common courses of action, and fashion each other's lives and character. The world of humanity into which each new life comes becomes thus to that life a moral environment, exerting upon it forces almost irresistible in their energy. If therefore at the origin of the human race sin entered, its perpetuation

and universal extension must follow under the influence of natural law and of social and moral forces. So obvious is this result in the experience of mankind that we stand aghast in its presence, and ask ourselves, can any moral responsibility be possible under such circumstances, and can the being who created such a world be wise and good? The wisdom and goodness of the constitution shines out in its true moral glory as soon as we pause to consider its influence and power for good. Out of this constitution comes the possibility of all our highest virtues. Mother's love, father's toil, brotherly care, the patriot's self-sacrifice, the martyr's giving of his life, all the highest, noblest, most beautiful things in our moral life spring out of this constitution, and would not be possible apart from it. A still more complete vindication will appear when we come to find that it renders possible the redemption even of a world fallen into all the depths of this sin and depravity.

But apart from these considerations each individual conscience if carefully questioned acknowledges not only personal responsibility but also a common responsibility as one of a family, a tribe, or a nation; and to the mind sufficiently enlightened to take in his relation to the whole race, this sense of responsibility extends to all. We are so constituted that we would not if we could sever ourselves from this solidarity of humanity; our deepest nature accepts even the moral results of living and dying as one with our race. Even

when we hold ourselves personally blameless we yet accept as righteous the penal consequences which follow from the common sin. Thus a whole nation involved in war by an unwise act of its government acknowledges and accepts the consequences as justly falling upon all, even though they may have not been personally consenting parties, or may have even protested against it. By their political relationship they are morally one with the wrongdoers, and must with them share the consequences. This principle as we have already seen is clearly recognised and asserted in Scripture. It is even more prominent in the Old Testament than in the New. In fact this solidarity of the race belongs to the earlier stage of its development. The moral progress of humanity is from the mass to the individual. Ancient political life scarcely recognised such a thing as individual rights and liberty. The state, the common unity, was everything, the individual nothing. In our day, on the other hand, and especially within the last century, individualism has so asserted itself that we almost forget that we have not yet entirely escaped from the law of solidarity, and that under that law every man is still born into the world, and that under it alone can he be properly trained and prepared for the exercise of a full individual responsibility.

Terrible therefore as are the results of this universal extension of sin and depravity to the whole race under this law of moral solidarity and

natural heredity, yet when fully considered they must approve themselves as right and just. They are the fitting outcome of sin, exhibiting in full light its evil and wrong, that as Paul says sin "might be shown to be sin," and "through the commandment might become exceeding sinful." The awful severity of the Divine justice in thus punishing sin with its own dire moral consequences, in so weaving justice into the very nature of things, that sin must by the very law of all being move onward to perdition, is something before which sinful humanity must surely tremble. In our moral weakness we would fain seek some easier way of life. But we must ever bear in mind that any lowering of this severe standard of moral justice as against sin involves in the very nature of things a corresponding dimness of the moral glory of that Divine image in which God made us men.

CHAPTER IV

DEATH

"SIN when it is full-grown bringeth forth death," says St James. Paul goes even further and says, "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin," and again "In Adam all die." The relation of death to human sin thus becomes an important topic of theology.

The older theology asserted a threefold death, natural or the separation of the soul from the body, spiritual or the separation of the soul from God, and eternal or the separation of soul and body from God for ever. That the term death is used in Scripture in the second and third senses is we think true, at least in the New Testament. But such use is clearly tropical, and the primary and most general use of the term is of natural or physical death. It is, we think, in this primary sense that death is set forth by Paul in Rom. v. as the result of sin, as appears from verse 14. The two tropical significations of death express most important religious truths, one of which we have just considered under the results of sin; and the other of which must be fully considered hereafter. Our present concern is with the question, Is physical death to the human race the penalty or result of sin?

That death is the natural termination of

animal life is obvious. Our modern biological studies have emphasized rather than diminished the force of this fact, and have also so emphasized the physical side of human nature as to make death appear to be quite as natural to men as to the other members of the animal creation. Some difficulty thus without doubt arises as to the moral relation of physical death to sin? On the other hand the moral and religious faith of humanity has from the earliest times attached death to sin as its penalty or result. The oldest religions, heathen religions, religions of the most barbarous tribes and of the most civilized nations unite with the Hebrew faith and Christianity in this belief. Correspondent to this is the belief in the exemption of the pre-eminently good from death at various times in the world's history. Enoch and Elijah are the conspicuous Old Testament examples of this. That this is the faith of Christianity there can be no question. Apart from any interpretation of the third of Genesis and of other particular passages, it so enters into the entire Christian view of man's moral relations to the unseen world and to the future, and also of the atoning work of Christ, that to deny this would be to overthrow most important elements of the Christian faith. The question is thus of no small importance: Is this religious faith founded in substantial fact? and is it in harmony with the reason of the case?

In answer to this question we cannot think

it satisfactory to say that, while death is the outcome of a natural law common to man with the lower animals, to man it serves the purpose of a penalty inasmuch as his conscience associates it with his sin. To constitute it truly the penalty of sin, we think it necessary to show that, apart from sin, man as a spiritual being would not have died, and this is, we think, the true content of religious faith. It is no objection to a penalty that it takes place by natural law; it is only needful to show that the moral law controls the natural law bringing it in to do its work under the proper moral conditions. The task thus set before us is one of no little difficulty inasmuch as the evidence of direct fact is excluded. We know of no man without sin, and we know nothing of the race as a race before sin on which to found an observation of facts as to the operation of the natural law of death. The whole testimony of Scripture is a testimony of religious faith. The first beginning of that faith is not a matter of definite record apart from a purely literal interpretation of the third of Genesis, and even then we are thrown back upon authority rather than upon fact and the reason of the case. On the other hand the persistence of this belief through all ages and its extension to all people seems presumptive evidence that it is founded not in a blind religious faith, but in a faith called out by facts of universal experience. For such facts we must therefore seek.

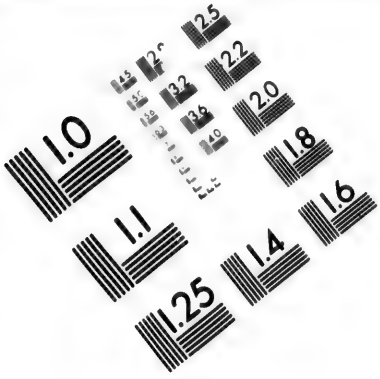
Our thoughts are first of all directed to a class of facts which, perhaps, did not originate this belief of the relation of sin to death, but which has doubtless had much to do with its perpetuation and extension among men. It is a fact of universal experience that sin shortens human life, and that the premature death of the great majority of the race is brought about directly and obviously by their own sins, the sins of their parents, or the sinful passions either of individuals or bodies of men, in origination of private quarrels or public war. This experience is frequently referred to in the Psalms and Proverbs, so that it was almost an aphorism that "bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days," and that "the wicked shall be cut off from the land," and "the seed of the wicked shall be cut off." Thus, from very early times there was a broad induction from human experience, which laid the foundation of a religious faith which connected righteousness with "length of days," and sin with death. This same faith, found in sudden death, in calamitous death, in pestilence and destructive diseases, and other natural phenomena, and even in the hand of warlike enemies, evidence of the anger of God against sin. One of the most ancient traditions of the race, preserved in all south-western Asia and the adjacent parts of Europe, and probably re-appearing even in America, is of the Deluge as a Divine judgment of death against the race for abounding sin This moral judgment appears not in the Biblical

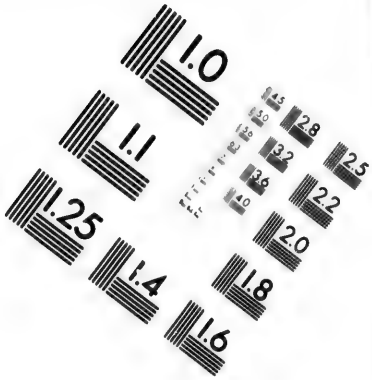
form of the tradition alone, but in the polytheistic Babylonian form as well. The faith which regards death as the extreme penalty of sin is thus bound up with the faith in a Divine providence, which regulates all the affairs of men on the principles of a moral government.

Our modern biological science rather confirms than otherwise this ancient religious belief. While it may remove the idea that these things are an immediate and arbitrary infliction of Divine judgment, and may serve to reduce them all under the domain of general law, it only makes more clear the relation of that law to moral causes, so that the old aphorism "The labour of the righteous tendeth to life" is most completely vindicated by modern science. But something more than these facts, important and suggestive though they may be, is needed as the foundation of the religious faith that death is the universal penalty of universal sin. This is, we think, to be found in the moral and religious experience associated with death itself. Death in all ages has been to men the king of terrors. Stout hearts may brave his approach, or may even seek release through him from other more dreaded evils; philosophy may strive to fortify the mind against his inevitable approach; but do what we will, the mind of man shrinks back from death, and would if it could prevent or postpone its coming. And with its coming comes the clearer consciousness of the sins and errors of life. The nearer approach of death gives clearness to the

moral judgment and reinforces the voice of conscience, so that the hour of death becomes almost in itself a day of judgment of the whole past life. Sin in this experience becomes most really the sting of death. It is useless to say that these terrors are supernatural, and hence fictitious and superstitious. They are the direct result of our moral nature, the voice of conscience itself, its remorse over sin. If we admit the validity of conscience in life, we cannot deny its warning premonitions in the hour and article of death.

It is through this experience that death has become to each individual man the final arraignment before God for the sin of his life, and it is easy to understand how in this way it becomes to both the moral and the religious sense the universal and extreme penalty of human sin. The account in the third of Genesis may be the embodiment of this faith in allegorical form; or, as we are inclined to believe, it may be more, a historical tradition carrying this faith back to the earliest appearance of moral convictions, of sin and of death in the experience of the race, an experience at once so distinct in its awful reality of moral and physical pain, and so breaking in upon the conscious joy of life, that its remembrance was perpetuated to all generations; especially as to every succeeding generation and individual, the experience was repeated. The experience of universal sin, of universal conscious judgment of sin, and of universal death,





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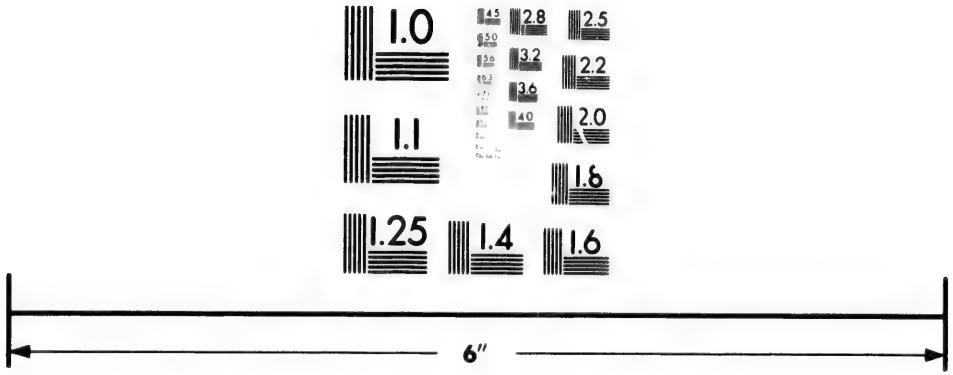

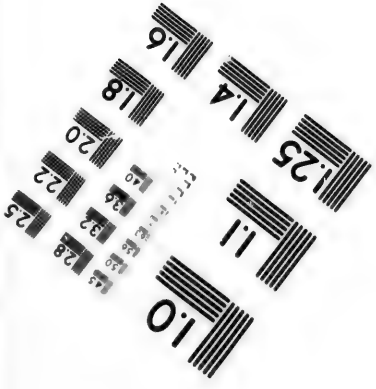

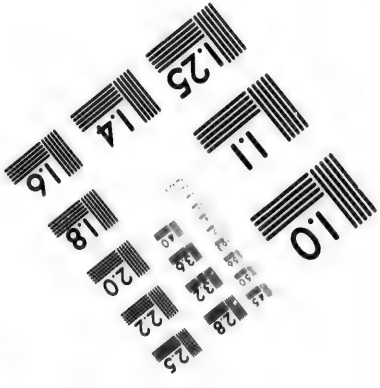

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became to both conscience and religious faith the foundation facts for this religious belief.

The sole scientific objection to the validity of this belief is the presumption that, apart from sin, the natural law of decay and death which governs all animal life would, in any case, have obtained in the life of man. That it has so obtained is certainly true. But it has obtained side by side with the universal fact of sin. Does it so prevail in virtue solely of the natural law? or is the natural law here instrumental and conditional on the moral law? To prove the first alternate would be, we think, scientifically impossible. It would demand an experiment which, in a sinful race, cannot now be made. On the other hand, the reasonableness of the second alternate is seemingly at least apparent.

If sin be a descent to the lower and merely animal life, as well as the perversion and overthrow of the higher life, then it is only reasonable to suppose that, as its result, the law of the lower life, the exhaustion of the vital forces through their exclusive use, should once more obtain, and thus the moral law becomes the higher condition of the physical. To substantiate this, certainly the experience of all human life comes in, that violation of moral law now hastens the operation of the natural law by which death is wrought. It is not, therefore, either unreasonable or unscientific to regard it as conditioning that law from the beginning in regard to moral beings.

On the other hand we have seen that even in

this imperfect moral life, and among a race the physical constitution of which has universally felt the effects of sin, and in an environment which in countless ways works in the same direction, "the labour of the righteous tendeth to life." It is not an exhaustion, but rather an increase of the vital forces. Is it then unreasonable to believe that a perfect moral life, and a perfect environment of that life, may have led to physical immortality? Or is it unreasonable to hope that, in a future age, a perfect spiritual restoration may be accompanied by the restoration, even to humanity, of physical immortality? It is very true that these considerations fall short of scientific demonstration; but we are building theology on religious faith; not on scientific or philosophical demonstration. It is "the evidence of things not seen," and "the substance of things hoped for" which forms the true foundation of our certainty or assurance here. We have only to show that this assurance is neither unreasonable nor unscientific. It is we grant beyond the power of science or reason to give us this faith in immortality founded on spiritual perfection. It may be even difficult for science to accept it; she may affirm that from her standpoint of the observation of purely physical forces, it is improbable that moral or spiritual forces could hold under conditions so universal a biological law. But neither science nor reason can affirm that such is not the fact; nor can they say that it is impossible, nor can they deny that there are both facts and scientific considerations looking in

this direction and bringing it at least within the limits of the possible and so of the reasonable.

These considerations might be vastly increased in force, nay raised almost to the point of rational certainty, were we to resort to arguments based on the wisdom, goodness and justice of God. But as the foundations of all these must be religious faith and moral conviction, we may let the matter rest on the moral and religious convictions of the race, and pre-eminently on those Divinely-guided and perfected convictions which are set before us in the Word of God. Here certainly death entered the world of men by sin at the beginning, and to all the ages, " the wages of sin is death."

CHAPTER V

THE END OF SIN

If our studies thus far of the nature of sin are correct, the results of sin are a part of its very nature, so that, as one has profoundly said, God punishes sin by sin; sin is its own penalty. The man who sins against the Holy Spirit "hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal sin." Is then, sin, with all its varied forms of evil, eternal? This is the most terribly painful question which the mind of man can approach.

1. The sinful act once done cannot be undone. It has introduced a new thing, a wrong, into God's universe. This wrong necessitates a new, a defensive position on the part of every moral being in the universe. That position is justice. Justice is the right relation of God and of all moral beings toward sin, a relation of separation from it, and of recognition that its penalty, which in the Divine order is self-inflicted, is just. For this relation moral judgment knows no substitution. The relation is right, and is the only right, and under its law the sin as an eternal fact, must abide. Justice must represent an unchangeable attitude of the Divine nature; it is the final and immutable right relation toward sin.

And this justice is perfect. It is absolutely right; it satisfies. It seeks for no end beyond itself. It yields its claims to no other demand; it cannot do so. If God be God, and right be right, justice must abide, and so far as conscience and reason can tell us, this is the end. By the course of justice, God is in right relation toward the sin, and the universe is in right relation toward it as well as toward God. Even the sinner himself feels that under the just results of his sin, he stands in the only right relation as a sinner toward all beings and all things. The law of justice thus counteracts sin by establishing a new harmony of moral relations. Sin is rightly placed under justice, and this is its first conceivable end, and the only end presented by purely moral intuition.

2. In contrast to this stern verdict of moral judgment, the religious faith of all the ages has maintained the hope of the forgiveness of sin. This hope we find expressed in the remotest times, and in even the feeblest and darkest forms of religious faith. It has perhaps more than any other single element entered into the development of religious acts of service toward God; and, according as these acts have been guided by true or false ideas of how forgiveness may be secured, it has elevated or degraded religious life. Is the forgiveness of sin a righteous possibility? Can it be made consistent with eternal and immutable justice? The answer to this question can only be given as we come next to study the redemption that is in Christ Jesus as the very centre

and substance of the Christian religion. At present we are concerned only with those preliminary considerations which lie in the facts of our moral nature.

We have already seen that sin lies (1) in act, (2) in guilt, (3) in consequent ruin of our moral being.

1. The act is my own, created by my own choice, it is of and from myself alone. It is not even the natural outcome of the powers which God has given me. I have created it only by ignoring or degrading those powers. The act cannot be assigned to another. I cannot repudiate it, or assign it to another. My own consciousness must be eternal witness that it is mine. There is thus in my moral nature no release or seeming possibility of release from my relation to the act of sin.

2. The guilt, the blameworthiness of the act is also mine. This belongs to the paternity of the act, and it cannot in the nature of things be transferred. Others may share its consequences, even where it was in no sense their personal act, but they cannot share its blame. The *culpa*, to borrow the expressive old Latin word, is mine alone, from the very fact that it is my act.

3. There remains of the sin only its effect, first toward God and all holy beings, and then within myself.

Can my relation to God be changed? Can a just God deal with the guilty sinner other than in justice? To this again my moral nature has

but one answer, No. Religious faith alone clings to the hope of forgiveness. Can God's holy creatures stand in any other relation to me, a guilty sinner, than that prescribed by the right of moral law? Again my moral nature has but one answer, and that is, No.

Nor is there any remedial hope in the results of sin upon my own moral nature. Those results are all and only destructive. They tend only to perpetuate sin, in the terribly expressive words of Scripture to eternal sin. Conscience and faith, God's vicegerents within deposed from the throne, self, passion, and appetite bearing sway, there is within myself no healing power, no possibility of restoration; I can only cry with Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this body of death?"

There remains another conceivable end of sin, *i.e.* the cessation of being of the sinner, and in this the consummation of justice against the sinner. But this is an end which religious faith has never anticipated, and which philosophy has no power to affirm. Such cessation must be either the act of God or the result of sin. The act of God we could know only through revelation to religious faith, and of such revelation or faith we have no trace either in Scripture or in outside religious faith. Nor does the overthrow of our moral nature by sin afford ground for such a doctrine. That overthrow is a change of relation, not of essential being. The spirit in its moral, religious, and rational attributes is still

there, but perverted against God, against itself, against the universe of beings in which it still exists, though as an outcast, but in this perverted existence there is no prophecy of annihilation but only of eternal pain. There thus lies in our moral nature and in ourselves no hope but that sin shall eternally abide under Divine justice, and with it the sinner in his sin.

The Door of Hope.

In one only aspect of our moral constitution which we have not yet examined does there lie a door of hope of salvation from sin, and the persistent, and we had almost said universal, faith of humanity in the possibility of salvation leads us to turn to that door with strong confidence. In some way or other this faith must be justified, and in some direction it must have a foundation in facts, both of human nature and of history. What are these facts?

They belong to that constitution of our moral nature which involves us in a solidarity of moral responsibility, and which forms the moral basis of the natural law of heredity. We have already seen the result of this constitution in the history and development of sin in the race. Following from this constitution the penal consequences of the sin of the first parents have reached out to the whole race, and its results have been a condition of universal sin both in act and nature.

But if under this constitution one moral head

could curse the race with universal penal consequences and a fallen nature, under the same constitution another moral head may bless the race and lift it back to goodness and right. The full development of this principle we must leave till we come to study the Christian faith in the work of Christ for the world's redemption from sin. Just now we need only say that the world's moral history is full of illustrations of the saving power of this principle, and the whole history of the world's faith in the forgiveness of sin is based upon its application in symbolic form if not directly. The very idea that one may suffer for another's sin, and that such suffering is meritorious and avails as an atonement before God is a part of the oldest religious faith of the race, and grows directly out of this sense of moral unity before God. The hope of redemption has thus been given not to a chosen people alone, but to the race, and even the darkest and most miserable of sin-cursed humanity have not lived in utter despair. And this faith has been kept alive throughout the ages, as patriots have died to save their country, martyrs to preserve the truth to their fellow-men, heroes to rescue the perishing, and as others have toiled and suffered, not for self, but to bless their kind.

The hope thus kindled had indeed its centre in an elect line, chosen of God for His world-wide purpose of grace, the line itself being almost a continuous type of the great redeeming work for which it made preparation.

We wish our readers to approach this subject not as a theological dogma, but as historic fact. Let us ask ourselves candidly whether or not whatever of moral redemption the world has known has not come to us through Jesus of Nazareth, and if this be admitted as a fact, we shall not dispute about dogma or theories of atonement, but willingly address ourselves to follow whithersoever a candid study of this fact may lead us.

DIVISION V.—REDEMPTION

OUR study of man's moral constitution and sin reveal the fact that while under that constitution there may be a possibility of salvation, nature provides no moral force by which we may be saved. By both natural and moral sequence penalty can only follow sin as a necessary consequence. Therefore if any salvation can come to man, if this persistent faith of the race is to be realised in fact, salvation must come not by the operation of nature from within ourselves or by our own act, but by help from without, *i.e.* from above. New forces both of moral nature and motive, and also of moral action, must be introduced to meet that which under the old nature and the old law can only issue in despair. Such moral help from without or above is a new nature, supernatural. Through sin supernatural religion becomes a necessity.

God, Creation, Providence, Sin, are facts of the universe and its history. They exist, God as the fountain head, the others as the order of nature, either as the work of God or man. But this order of nature includes no provision for redemption from sin. It may, and we believe does, admit of it. But if sin appears and redemption is provided, it is a new work of God, and so in the

true sense supernatural. It is a special Divine intervention to save man from sin. We cannot therefore turn to nature or to reason, or to natural conscience, or natural religion for light on this subject. We must look for it in history. If God has intervened with special provisions for man's salvation from sin, the provision must be found as an existent, nay, most prominent, important, and unmistakable fact in the world's moral history.

Christianity professes to be such a provision. It is essentially the revelation of redemption in Christ Jesus.

We have already examined the claims of Christianity to be regarded as not only a true religion but pre-eminently the true religion, a supernatural revelation of God to man in Christ Jesus. All that we have said under that head applies here and finds here its fitting point of unity in a system of religious truth. We now find supernatural religion to be a moral necessity, and we find provision for its introduction in the moral and religious constitution of the race. While supernatural it is thus not unnatural. It on the other hand preserves the closest connection with the moral and religious order of nature. By this harmony of the supernatural order with natural religion, with moral order, as well as with a wider unity of all natural law, our religious faith receives its most important confirmation and Christianity is especially commended to us as God's remedy for sin.

The record of this revelation we have in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and the New. As we study its historic development, we shall find that the religious faith in God, Creation, Providence and responsibility is not only recognized as a natural order of things, and as truth of fact, but also that they are nowhere spoken of as a matter of special revelation, and are accepted as acknowledged truth. So also sin is spoken of as an existent fact, perverting the right order of things, but it is traced up to its origin as an intruder in God's world, and against it judgment is revealed both in nature and revelation. The whole system thus preserves a most perfect unity both in natural and moral order. Everywhere the Divine revelation is linked on to all that God has already unfolded, and is so fitted to it that they form a perfect harmony. The supernatural while it reaches far beyond yet grows out of the natural; it is the work of the one God. Hereafter we shall see that the Atonement itself as the great central force of redemption is not an unnatural thing in God's world, but is linked on to the moral constitution of the race as if provision had been made for it in the eternal counsels of God. We shall find that the principle of solidarity in responsibility which we have already studied as yielding important results in our doctrine of sin, and which is a patent natural fact in human history, lies at the basis of both redemption and atonement and constitutes the foundation of the entire work of man's salvation from sin. But

while the possibility of salvation thus lies in nature, the moral power which makes that possibility actual is not in nature. It is a new gift from God, and thus is in the true sense supernatural. Jesus Christ brings in a moral kingdom into this world, but yet "not of this world."

In another respect this supernatural order is linked to the natural. All evolution as an ascending series is based upon the supernatural, the periodic coming into nature of new and higher forces. The Redemptive order is a higher order. "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." Supernatural redemption is thus the latest of a series of wonderful steps in each of which God reveals Himself in new and higher aspects of His Being, from glory to glory; and in each of which His creation rises to a higher perfection. What He has still in reserve for us we yet know not, but we do know that it will be a yet more perfect revealing of Himself and bestowal of His own image upon His creatures.

CHAPTER I

THE PRIMITIVE REVELATION OF REDEMPTION

THAT in some way after the appearance of sin in the race God revealed to men the hope of salvation from it, is evident from the universal existence of that hope even in the face of sin. Such hope quite as much implies a way of deliverance as does conscience a judgment. The ancient traditions embodied in the book of Genesis, but preserved also in various forms among other nations, have preserved an idea of this revelation, as they have of the origin of sin, and this idea has passed through the Hebrew Scriptures into our Christian faith. From the book of Genesis we may make the following summary of this primitive revelation.

1. An original revelation of Divine judgment against sin, and of hope of deliverance following the origin of sin.

2. A continuation and even development of this faith to Noah.

3. A second great revelation of judgment against sin, and of salvation from it in the deluge.

4. A new development of sin resulting in the centering of the hope of salvation in the covenant

family of Abraham. The religious institutions of this primitive age were the family, sacrificial worship, and probably the weekly Sabbath. We have already dealt with the first sin, as Paul deals with it as a historic fact. Such it must have been under any possible construction of the third of Genesis, and under any possible view of the facts obvious in the past history and present condition of the race. In the same spirit we must deal with the revelation of Divine judgment against sin, and of the hope of salvation embodied in the same primitive document. There may be differences of opinion as to its nature, origin, and interpretation, but the facts embodied in the document so accord with universal human history and experience that they cannot be questioned. The fact of a beginning of sin near the beginning of humanity, and of a revelation to man of God's judgment against sin, and of a hope of deliverance appears from this, that these two ideas of judgment against sin, and hope of deliverance from it, have passed into all ancient religions, and are even to-day the almost universal possession of the race. We need not therefore speculate as to how this revelation was given, or how the record of it in Genesis came to take its present form, or how that form is to be interpreted. For the purpose of religious faith, and even of theology, it is sufficient to know the facts which we think are quite indisputable. Everywhere, from this first revelation downward, men are seen to be conscious of sin, and to be holding

fast to some hope that in some way they may be again restored to the favour of God. The content of this first revelation was thus a matter of universal conscience, and was never after entirely lost to the race. What was that content?

1. It bound up the pain, the toil, and the suffering of death which fall to the lot of men with their sin. This is not only set forth in the third of Genesis, but is to-day the universal consciousness of the race, a religious or moral instinct of faith, something which they feel rather than reason out.

2. It set forth a hope of deliverance from the power of the tempter and of sin, wrought out through man, and finally triumphant. We can only apprehend the importance of this twofold primitive revelation when we see how completely it has entered into and governed the religious development of man in all subsequent ages.

The fourth and fifth chapters of Genesis, especially the fifth, can scarcely be called a history. They are constructed partly from genealogical tables, one of the very oldest forms of literature, and partly from intermingled narrative touching the beginnings of family life, of religious worship, and of various acts of human life. But by far their most important element is their portraiture of the growing consciousness of sin and its relation to God on the one hand, and of salvation through the Divine favour on the other. In Cain and Lamech we have set forth the development of sin in connection with the most familiar aspects and

passions of human life. In the very nature of the case only thus could sin have been developed. In Abel, Seth, and Enoch we have the development of religious faith, and in the translation of Enoch its culmination in the idea of a complete triumph over death as the penalty of sin. Finally the world appears as divided into two lines, one of sin and death, the other of faith and salvation, the one culminating in a world of sinners and in God's judgment against their sin by the flood, and the other in righteous Noah and the saving of his house.

There is thus involved in these ancient traditional documents an entire historical development of humanity on its moral and religious side, as well as of its civilisation. Of that development we have no history in the modern sense of the term. Under the most literal interpretation, it is only a survival of fragments. They are like a few fossil specimens in a rock from which all other vestiges of its former life have disappeared. Even the original materials of these may be replaced by the enduring flint of a later age. But however changed or fragmentary they may be, they tell a story of the vanished past. That story reads thus :—Men sinned ; penalty followed their sin ; their development of civilisation increased their sin ; still heavier judgment fell upon them : but out of the multitudes of sinners a few sought and found God. And these were the men by whom the race was preserved and carried forward to the higher life of a new age. Obscure and fragment-

ary as these traditions are, they thus carry with them the attestation of truth. They are true to all human history.

In the tradition of the Deluge we have another important step in the revelation of sin and salvation. Already in Abel and Enoch we have illustrations of men finding assurance of favour with God. This assurance is now repeated in a most marked manner to Noah. In some way the Divine voice which gave him intimation of coming judgment against sin, and of the necessary means of salvation, gave him assurance that, "Thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation."

We have thus at this point a cumulative revelation :—

1. Of Divine judgment against sin.
2. Of Divine conviction and reproof of sin.
3. Of Divine favour toward the righteous.
4. Of a way of salvation to obedient faith.
5. And, following all, of Divine covenant of promise for the future.

That this revelation was definite, and given through actual events, of which the tradition is a fair account, we think a thoroughly reasonable view. These events left a most profound and lasting impression on the minds of men, as appears in religious tradition and even in mythology. We find substantially in all south-western Asia and in both Europe and America remembrances, either as tradition or myth, pointing to some such remarkable event as leaving a permanent impress on the world's moral and religious faith.

We have still another fragmentary picture of a new development of sin after the flood, and of judgment in the form of a political separation of the nations. The document is again brief and obscure, and has been variously interpreted. But it certainly means that in some way which men acknowledged to be Divine, the compact family or tribal organisation of the human race, which was again giving rise to unholy ambitions and purposes, was broken up; and a scattering of nations took place, resulting in a movement out of which came the call of Abraham and our first distinct and somewhat complete record of the personal life of a man who walked with God in the consciousness of His favour. There can be no doubt that at this point we stand before a great epoch in the revelation of God's salvation to a sinful race, and before passing to its consideration we may close our present chapter by a summary of universal and primitive ideas in religion. These ideas are to be found not only in the origins preserved in our Hebrew book of Genesis, but also, in sometimes obscure, darkened, or perverted form, yet in form capable of recognition in the world's religions in most widely separated lands and ages.

1. A God, a Divine power above man.
2. That sin is displeasing to God.
3. That favour and forgiveness may be sought and found.

Whatever may have been the origin of these ideas, the evidence is ample that they existed among men in the dawn of history, and that

almost universally from B.C. 2000 to 4000. This evidence appears in the historic records of all nations of whom such records remain; and far beyond these records monumental altars and places of worship tell the same story.

Along with these beliefs we have various religious institutions also existing among men from the very dawn of history. In the forefront of these was the family. The family was of course natural, social, and political, as well as religious. But as we find it in the earliest records of history, it was organised on a religious basis, and was the very foundation of moral and religious order. In that religious organisation the father was head, protector, provider, governor, and priest of his family. He represented the family before God, in the councils of the state, on the field of battle, as well as in the fundamental industries by which men were supported. This organisation of the family prevailed among all nations which have left us records reaching back to the dawn of history. Exception to this in polyandry and in indiscriminate sexual intercourse are indeed mentioned, but as enormities of utterly degraded peoples, without religion, law, or civilisation. This organisation of human society in families is founded in religion; it implies law, order, responsibility, right and God over all. He is the God of all the families of the earth. The family becomes the nursery of all moral virtues, both the regulative and the motive, from the obedience of fear to the assistance of love.

Side by side with the family stands sacrifice as a mode of approach to God. The origin of this universal institution is a mystery apart from ideas of sin, penalty, and forgiveness. From the beginning it involved the shedding of blood. Mere nature religion might lead to offerings of fruits and flowers, but not to sacrifice. The institution as an expression of religious feeling brings us face to face with suffering and death; and, as all religious history testifies, these were felt to be the penalty of sin. The idea of vicarious suffering and vicarious death is thus bound up with that of sacrifice. The immemorial existence of this institution is thus another universal testimony to the early existence of the ideas which are set forth in the early chapters of Genesis.

The third institution coming out of this dawn of history is the Sabbath. It is not so prominent as the other two, and its observance was less general. But it too bears testimony to the idea of God, and of both moral and religious obligation to him. As associated with special sacrifices, it becomes an auxiliary to the moral and religious teaching of that institution.

CHAPTER II

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

WITH the call of Abraham we emerge from what may be called the prehistoric period of Revelation, and enter a region of more definite historical tradition. The Abrahamic covenant is the natural sequel of the earlier universal revelation which we have just studied. The recipient and the bearer to the world of the new revelation is a patriarch, a family head, of whom it is said, "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." The new religious order was thus founded in the existing family institution. To this family head are given promises which reach far into the future, and imply for his family a preeminent position in the religious history of the race. These promises by no means imply the withdrawal from the great body of men of the knowledge and favour of God already bestowed, nor the limitation of God's purpose of redemption to any one nation or people or class; but the choice of a particular people, that through them the blessing might come to all the nations of the earth. The necessity for this special and

more limited selection for the purposes of extended revelation will appear presently.

The first step in the elective process was the separation of the chosen family from the contamination of the surrounding idolatry then rapidly increasing in the world. "God had said to Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will shew thee." Referring to this period, Joshua reminds Israel that then their fathers already "served other gods." Religious and moral degeneracy of the great body of the race through idolatry thus created a necessity for this new dispensation.

Idolatry may be described as that perversion of religion which substitutes the fictions of imagination for the facts by which God is revealed to man; and the lower passions and desires of human nature for the pure moral spirit of true religion. The introduction of material embodiments of these degenerate ideas resulted in animal worship on the one hand, and in image worship on the other. Not infrequently both were combined. Few tendencies in religion have been more degrading than this. Even the darkest ignorance and superstition does not lead to more disastrous results. Attaching itself to the onward progress of civilization in art and luxury, it has proved the utter ruin of one after another of the proudest fabrics of ancient history. If, then, the world must be redeemed and purified, special provisions of moral and religious forces

became necessary to preserve, and finally establish, the true knowledge of God among men. This was the first mission of the chosen people. This separation from idolatry and its uncleanness was officially marked by the institution of circumcision. Side by side with this separation was the development of the personal religious life of Abraham. Of that life we have a comparatively full idea. The tradition has evidently been well preserved. There is a marked absence of anything like legendary embellishment. The failures as well as the excellencies of the patriarch are all noted. The course of Divine revelation to and through him, though most wonderful in itself as one of the highest examples of spiritual life, is presented in the simplest and most modest terms. But such was its spiritual perfection, that St Paul finds in Abraham the means of defining and illustrating the fundamental principles of Christianity itself. The familiar facts of Abraham's religious life are recorded from the twelfth chapter of Genesis onward, and in chapters xii. 1-3, xiii. 14-18, xv. 1-6, and xxii. 1-14 we have the great central promises of the Abrahamic covenant.

These promises implied, as their very foundation, a deep moral and religious consciousness. God made Himself known to Abraham. Of the manner of this revelation, which has sometimes been distinguished as theophany, nothing is said. We have no scenic description, such as is given us in the sixth of Isaiah. It is simply said, "God appeared," or "God said unto Abraham."

This implies the most distinct and definite consciousness of a personal God and of His will. Both conscious convictions of duty and of promise appeal to the religious faith of this patriarch, not as strange things, but as if usual. "I am God Almighty, walk before Me and be thou perfect"; "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." Such words as these give us glimpses of the inner life of this great man. It was a life of profound religious reverence, of great moral earnestness, and of holy confidence toward God. He was, as well as was called, the friend of God. Here, then, we have the second great element in the mission of the chosen people, and the second necessity for their call, the cultivation of a deeper moral and spiritual life. The general sense of sin, and penitent spirit, and the general confidence toward God, which were the outcome of the primitive revelation, were forces not powerful enough for the tremendous task of redemption. Concentration of moral forces must beget an intensity of energy and an earnestness of conviction, such as creates the puritan, the reformer, the hero, and the martyr before the world could be saved.

Again, in this call of Abraham was laid the foundation of a religious centre of the world's hope: "In Thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The development of this hope into the doctrine of the Messiah, whose kingdom is to rule and bless the world, becomes the central feature of the new dispensation.

Mosaism.

The development of the chosen family to a nation, with the special providential history which accompanied that development, constitutes the next stage in the unfolding of God's purpose of redemption. Mosaism and Prophetism were but the development in the wider field of a national life of the fundamental principles already involved in the call of Abraham, viz., a closer and more personal relation to God, a deeper moral sense, and a stronger and more definite faith in the future, finally widening out to embrace a blessing for all nations. The family phase of religious life under a strong religious headship, such as that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had nearly, though not quite, exhausted itself in the five hundred years between Abraham and Moses. The home in which Moses was born and first trained was one evidently after the ancient type, one under parents who commanded their children to keep the way of the Lord. But such homes were now rare, if we may judge from the general character of the people. The chosen people had not only fallen under political bondage, but were rapidly being assimilated to the idolatrous spirit by which they were surrounded. If their high calling was to be accomplished a new departure was immediately necessary. That new departure was the mission of Moses. It was to link religion with the national life of a chosen and separate people, as the call of Abraham had linked it with

that of a chosen and separated family. The object was still the same, the preparation of a moral force which, under Christ, should go forth to take spiritual possession of the world.

The new departure was ushered in by a great ethnic event, the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt. This event was the outward occasion through which the revelation made through Moses came. Two centuries of bondage left the chosen people in a miserable plight, both as regards their moral sense and their religious faith. The deliverance was like an earthquake for the awakening of new faith, and the accompanying judgments were equally mighty for the awakening of moral sense, while the discipline of the wilderness once more developed the moral fibre needed for their work.

Through Moses was effected not only these great political events, with their corresponding moral and religious results, but he was also called to lay at least the foundations of political and religious organisation for the new people. Church and state here were one, and the legal system embraced both, without even the lines of separation which appeared in later times. The system was at once moral and ecclesiastical, civil and religious and military in fact, regulated the whole life of the people without distinction of functions. In this it only resembled all other national systems of that age. Its most conspicuous characteristic was its sharp moral definitions. It fixed the sense of sin beyond the possibility of

mistake. Abraham might deceive his conscience as well as Pharaoh by thinking that the end justified the means, but there was no avoiding the "thou shalt not" of Moses. The way of sin was strictly hedged off. Again, the religious ordinances at every turn drove the worshipping people to seek for forgiveness. It was pre-eminently a system for a people with a developed consciousness of sin. Every transgression had not only its penalty, but its atoning sacrifice. Of the development of this system for four hundred years we know but little. We have evidence in the traditions embodied in the books of Joshua, Judges, and the earlier prophetic histories, all seemingly compiled from ancient materials, that it was a thoroughly human development; that its religious spirit often ran into fanaticism and ferocity, and was not always free from low forms of superstition. There was the same contrast between the high moral and religious enlightenment of Moses and the ages immediately following, that we find between the Apostolic spirit and that of generations immediately following in the history of Christianity. The God-given ideas were left to work their way out through very unpromising human material. But step by step it won its way, reaching the summit of its spiritual power in the days of Samuel and David, and its decline was already begun with Solomon, when the pomp of ceremony began to take the place of the broken and contrite heart, and God had already initiated a new dispensation.

The weakness and the power of the Mosaic system appear together in the traditions of the Judges and the early days of Samuel. We have seen that while the preceding dispensations developed a general religious spirit, expressed in universal religious institutions, such as prayer, sacrifice and family religion, and while Abraham concentrated these in family life, there was yet wanting provision for a national religious life. The peculiarity of the Mosaic system was its provision for the expression of religion in the life of the nation. Its moral law passed over into the civil law of the nation. Its religious rites were no longer a family altar and individual worship; they were of an organized and national character. Moses gave a people, already separate and distinct by the covenant of circumcision, a national organization; for war, they were organized in tribes; for justice, they were placed under judges and elders; but for instruction and religion a priestly order, and, perhaps later, the tribe of Levi were set apart. It does not appear that this organization reached its completeness in the time of Moses. He probably only laid foundations. The supreme leadership of the state he himself held and Joshua after him, but there was no provision for its perpetuation. The king came in long after, and with him a far more complicated organization, not only civil and military but also religious, which was developed under David and Solomon. But of this development Moses laid the foundation and from his time

organized rites for the maintenance of religious life in the nation became a part of this Divinely-ordered history.

The form of this organization as we have seen was a state-church and a church-state; *i.e.*, the secular and religious functions were completely united. There can we think be no question that this was a necessity in that age. Physical force rather than moral ideas, then dominated the world. It was still the age of the development of sin; and sin is the triumph of the brute over the spirit. If moral and spiritual ideas were to survive such an age, they must have some embodiment of physical strength. But even in this age, this system soon developed its weakness, for the secular interest was stronger than the religious, and worldly fashions and ambitions ruled the policy of the church-state, and made it, in the greatness of its wealth and of its military conquests, forget its religious calling. The outward forms of national worship were maintained, but they were mere outward forms, dead ceremonies. This called forth the prophetic order and the next great step in the unfolding of redemption.

It will thus be seen that Mosaism added no new element of truth to the religious ideas already given to mankind. Its mission was the perpetuation and enforcement of truth. Sin and expiation were presented in more definite form, and the conception of God became more distinctly personal and ethical. But it supplied a large amount of new machinery and institutions for the presentation

of truth and its maintenance in the face of growing idolatrous superstition. It also broadened the sense of moral and religious obligation, extending it to national as well as individual and family relation to God.

Prophecy.

To supplement and complete the work of the Mosaic system in its conflict with idolatry and sin, and to meet its degeneracy into formalism, the prophets were raised up. They were men whose hearts had been strongly moved by the Spirit of God, and who under this inspiration judged clearly and truly of the moral and religious character of their times. At first their work was the completion and establishment of the Mosaic system in opposition to idolatrous tendencies. Until the time of Samuel the men of the prophetic spirit were largely engaged in this work. At first their work was more largely of a political character, the enforcement of law, the awakening of a national spirit, the vindication of liberty, and the salvation of the chosen people from threatened absorption in the idolatrous nations around them. The inspired men were then the judges. Later, when their distinct nationality had been gradually established, and kings were raised up, the first of these also were characterised, and perhaps even selected from the possession of the same divine gift. But already in the days of Samuel, if not before, the prophetic order made its appearance, whose work was of a more purely

religious character. They were the teachers of the people, rebuking sin, enforcing the law, and bringing the entire nation into conscious spiritual relation to God. It was this preliminary prophetic work which laid the foundations of the national greatness of Israel under David and Solomon.

But the introduction of the Kingdom called forth a new phase of prophetic work. The prophet became a distinctly spiritual messenger from God to king and people, reproving their sins, and enforcing true spirituality and sincerity in their religious life. The first, third, fifth, and seventh chapters of Isaiah are excellent examples of this work. Mingled with this we find the conflict with idolatry extending far down into the period of the kingdom.

But while thus applying and completing the work of Moses, so that their prophetic preaching was also known as *torah*, or instruction in the law of the Lord, they had also a most important contribution of their own to make in the development of God's purpose of redemption, an enlargement of religious faith and spiritual life to the full measure of preparation for the coming of Christ. This contribution is now clearly recognised and distinguished from other elements of their work as Messianic prophecy. It seems to us to begin with Nathan in the days of David. In 2 Sam. vii. 12-17, with David's comment in the following verses. Some, however, regard it beginning only with Isaiah iu the days of Ahaz and Hezekiah.

Messianic prophecy embraced a number of distinct elements which were gradually perfected and united in the minds of the prophets and their hearers.

1. There was the idea of a Kingdom of God, as opposed to the kingdoms of the world and of false gods. This naturally found its embodiment or representation to their minds in the political Israel; but faith in it as God's kingdom was a truly religious faith, its attributes were moral and divine, and the outward embodiment maintained and developed the spiritual conception.

2. There was the idea of an anointed King (*Messiah*), of the seed of David, chosen of God, to bring this Divine Kingdom to universal triumph and to spiritual perfection. To this King are ascribed the most God-like attributes, and his ideal portrait is exalted to a glory to be realised only in the spirit, and in Christ.

3. There was the idea that this Kingdom was essentially a reign of righteousness, a triumph not of the force of arms, but of the power of truth, right, and religion.

4. There was the rise of a new universalism, linked on to the promise given to Abraham, and to the original hope of humanity of deliverance from sin. The chosen people and the city of Zion were still the centre, but the "Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

5. There was finally the conception of an atonement for sin through the suffering servant

of Jehovah, at first the chosen people, and then their Messianic head God's Servant, the Branch, out of the root of David. "When He shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." From, as we conceive it, the time of David onward, this conception of an ideal Kingdom of truth and righteousness and of an anointed King becomes part of the faith of the chosen people and of the common prophetic outlook, appearing continuously in the writings of prophets and prophetic psalmists to the very close of the Old Testament canon.

This Messianic hope borrows its form from contemporaneous history. The history itself is almost typical prophecy, and continually lends itself easily and naturally to the expression of this growing hope. In days of prosperity the Messiah is the glorious and triumphant King, who at times, as under Uzziah or Hezekiah, seems almost at hand. In days of captivity He is the suffering servant, bearing the sins of many. When the captivity is well nigh over he is the new leader of Israel back to the promised land, another Joshua, or the coming King returning to Zion. But whatever its form, it gives a new direction to the religious faith of the chosen people. It turns their thoughts from the past to the future. Moses had centred their faith around the deliverance from Egypt. The religious institutions which he established were commemorative, except such as had their origin in the seasons.

They remembered the deliverance which God had wrought for their fathers, and all their patriotic and religious virtues were built upon this. Thus while the religious spirit of the Mosaic system centred in the past or in the present as thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth, or a yearly atonement for sins, that of prophecy built for the future. Without attempting to settle dates we may illustrate its spirit in the splendour of hope pictured for us in the seventy-second psalm, or under Uzziah and Hezekiah, in such exultant expressions as Isaiah ix. 6, 7 : " For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulder ; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mlghty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to establish it and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall perform this." Other conspicuous examples of this Messianic vision of the future we have in Isa. ii. 2 ; Isa. iv. 1-4 ; Isa. xi. and xii. ; Amos ix. 11 ; Joel ii. 28, iii. 18 ; Hosea xiv. 4, etc.

It must be noted that in all these prophets there is the most intimate connection of righteousness with this hope. They were no singers of a pleasant song to a prosperous and self-satisfied people. By far the larger part of their work is the denunciation of Divine judgment against

the sins of this very people to whose faith they offered these wonderful promises. The most intense moral fidelity is mingled with the fervour of this vision of hope. The call to repentance everywhere precedes the exhibition of the Messianic salvation.

The coming kingdom represents the first phase of Messianic prophecy. But when we come to the close of the seventh century B.C., we are introduced to an entirely new development of the Messianic hope, and to a more complete fulness of the prophetic revelation. The earlier prophets had already commenced to colour their pictures with the shadow of a coming judgment, as the background upon which they painted. Their moral fidelity demanded this. The coming King was not merely the triumphant head of the kingdom of righteousness; He is deliverer and Saviour as well. Every period of chastisement in the national history made the conception of God's saving power and of His coming salvation more perfect. All the varied experiences of the national life of this people, and even their personal and individual history, added to the fulness and variety of religious faith as set forth in psalm and proverb, so that the religious lessons of faith, hope, and consolation, as well as of warning and duty, thus exhibited in a varied literature become food for the souls of men in all the ages. Out of the reverses of national history we have also many of our most beautiful Messianic prophecies.

But when the final judgment came in the destruction of the temple and the city, and carrying away of the people into captivity, the blow was so terrible that for a time faith seems to have staggered, unless it were in the heart of a Jeremiah, and even he became the prophet of tears. But even out of his tears he, too, has still a vision of faith. "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me and find Me, when ye search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord, and I will turn again your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord, and I will bring you back again unto the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." When in the next generation, out of this God-given seed the Messianic faith again springs up, it is in a new and higher form. This form culminates in the fifty-third of Isaiah and in the twenty-second psalm. It grows out of the terrible problem of the awful sufferings of those who were at least relatively God's righteous people. The book of Job, it may be, represents the conflict of faith over this problem. Jeremiah, who linked the two periods, and Ezekiel, who represents the earlier period of the captivity, still use the regal forms in speaking of the Messiah. But Jeremiah

leads us gradually to the great teacher and servant of Jehovah, and Ezekiel builds a new temple and a new priesthood with an atonement which brings perfect purification, and a new covenant with perfect removal of sin is part of Jeremiah's Messianic age in which all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest of them. The standpoint of these two prophets is completed in the restored city and temple of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, where the royal Messiah again appears. But it is in the second Isaiah and in the related psalms and the book of Daniel that we find the idea fully wrought out of the world's salvation through the sufferings of Jehovah's elect servant, and the narrow view of the separate people again broadening out into the universal spirit of the book of Genesis. According to these latest exponents of the spirit of prophecy, the ideal kingdom is to be purely spiritual; its victories are not of arms but of truth, Isa. xlii. 1-4; its King is to be the servant of men; its purification is to be accomplished not by a splendid ritual but by a suffering life, Isa. liii., Dan. ix. 26; and of such a kingdom there is to be no end.

From this wonderful climax of prophetic faith we may now look back and sum up the entire field of saving truth which God had thus revealed to men, and especially to the faith of the chosen people.

1. God Himself stands distinctly revealed in His unity, personality, and perfection, and in His

moral attributes and His works of Creation and Providence. The great elements of natural religion are thus very fully developed.

2. Divine judgment against sin is very clearly manifest, and the consciousness of sin strongly developed along all the leading lines of moral duty.

3. The Divine mercy in the forgiveness of sins is explicitly revealed as a fact, and is attested by the conscious experience of God's favour by many illustrious men.

4. The way to that mercy is revealed through a typical atonement.

5. The organisation of the Divine economy for the world's salvation as a kingdom of righteousness is unfolded not only as a promise for the future, but also as a living reality in a chosen people.

6. An ideal King in this kingdom is clearly set forth to the faith of the chosen people.

7. The dignity of service and suffering in this kingdom are clearly revealed, and the true atonement for sin through the suffering of God's servant is prefigured and set forth to religious faith.

8. Finally, in all this revelation the fundamental elements of repentance and faith are continually presented and enforced. By these God's salvation from sin was efficiently introduced among men, not only among the chosen people, but, as shewn in the eleventh of Hebrews, in the primitive ages and extending to the outside nations.

And yet all this work, these conceptions of

truth which it took thousands of years to teach to a sinful race, was but preparatory to the full manifestation of the Son of God.

But before turning to the grand central study of His person and work, we may for a single moment glance at other collateral lines of preparation for His coming.

Collateral Preparations for the Christ.

Those added no new element to religious truth. They contained no new revelation of God. But in the expressive language of Scripture they prepared the way of the Lord. First we have the Greek language and mode of thought. The Hebrew mind was intuitive and grasped broad outlines of truth. It was specially fitted to lay the great moral and religious outlines. The Greek, on the other hand, was subtle, analytic, and versatile, and suited to development and perfection. In delicate distinction and exact expression of thought it has never been excelled if equalled. Egypt and the old empires of the Euphrates valley also brought their contributions, adding grandeur of magnitude and richness of sensuous imagery to the narrower circle of Hebrew ideas. And all these elements were brought together and fused as in a crucible by the conquests of Alexander and his successors. They all served as material out of which might be constructed the new form of Christianity. The substance was Christ and the law and the prophets which He came to fulfil, *i.e.* to fill out to

their completion. Then came Rome with her conquest of the world, and the reduction of its vast provinces to one grand system of law and order, giving men an idea of a world-wide kingdom, such as the new spiritual kingdom was to be, a contrast of the flesh with the spirit, of physical force with spiritual power, of sin with holiness, the anti-christ, the great enemy with which the young Christian giant was to grapple, but even as the enemy preparing the way, and by his greatness preparing the minds of men for the superior greatness of his conqueror. The highways of his legions became the highways of the missionaries of the Cross, his provinces became the provinces of the Christian church, his capital cities, their patriarchal seats, and, in fact, Christianity came in as a new spiritual kingdom to fill in and replace the vast emptiness of the decadent earthly kingdom. These collateral preparations were not a part of the unfolding of revelation. They did not enter as elements into God's great salvation. But they served as a providential preparation for its incoming, and proved that the fulness of time was now come. That into Christianity were imported elements from the far east is exceedingly improbable. India, China, and Japan were a world apart, and were so to continue for centuries to come. When, perhaps in our own day, Christ shall also come to these, their providential lines of preparation will also be manifest, and here also will He come to a people prepared for the Lord.

CHAPTER III

THE FULL SALVATION

FOR the purposes of our study we must take the entire Christian revelation as a whole from the birth of Christ to the close of the Apostolic age, and study it as a revelation of salvation for man. Our study is not merely one of progressive Biblical theology. It is rather of the incoming into the world of new saving truth with its spiritual light and life and power. It is a new and far more perfect sense of sin than men had ever known before, and it is a new and far more perfect faith in God through Christ saving men from their sins. Its entrance is connected with the advent of a person who brings to men both this light and this power, and who is in Himself "the way, the truth, and the light." The doctrine of the Deity of Christ underlies this revelation, and, as we have seen, grew directly out of it in the living faith of the Apostolic church. The study of this doctrine it is needless here to repeat. But this person was man as well as God, and His advent to the world for us and for our salvation was thus an incarnation, the unity of Deity with humanity. The statement of these doctrines in the Church is embodied in the formula of the

Council of Chalcedon ; Christ was truly God of one substance with the Father ; perfect man, of one substance with us ; two natures unconfused, one person inseparable.

But without expanding this doctrine at the present, or the supernatural facts upon which it is founded, we turn to the fact that when this personal Saviour of men came to the world, the chosen people were looking for the long expected Messiah. It is true that the great majority held very low and sensuous conceptions of His coming. Their misery was not the misery of sin but of Roman oppression, the salvation for which they waited was but earthly, and the universal kingdom which they expected was but the empire of the Jews, and not a *civitas dei.* But to some the higher spiritual conception was given ; their burden was the burden of sin, and the salvation for which they waited was a deliverance from its power. To bring this spiritual salvation was the work of Christ. When Jesus made His appearance He at once began to proclaim, as John had before him, this kingdom in these words, " Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." In that first word repent he sums up all God's moral revelation for the world's salvation, all that God had done to make the world feel sin to be sin. In the second the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, He sums up the faith which, as we have seen, had been growing for centuries in the hearts of the chosen people through the ministry of the prophets and the whole course of Messianic promise.

But when Christ came He was very far from being a mere teacher or prophet of old truth, however comprehensive and important. Nor was He a mere revealer or enforcer of new truth, though in that He far exceeded all who had gone before Him. John the Baptist was "that prophet," more than a prophet; in all the line there was none greater than he, since it was his to complete the prophetic work and office by making immediate preparation for Christ. This he did not only by preaching repentance and the approach of the kingdom with a power hitherto unequalled, so that men of all classes flocked unto him, but also by pointing the people directly to the Christ Himself. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." With these words the work of the prophets was complete.

Our Lord at first in a very natural way seemed only to be taking up and carrying forward His work of awakening men to a sense of sin and expectation of the Messianic salvation. But this preliminary work does not proceed very far before the impress of His own higher personality is felt. "Mighty works do shew forth themselves in Him." "Never man spake as this Man." "He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes." His hearers felt the power of the messenger as well as of the message. He was not a servant, but the Son in His own house. The Man, His authority, the depth and penetration of His words, the spotless purity of His life,

His supernatural works, all awoke in the breasts of men convictions of sin such as they had never known before, and a faith in God through Him which they had never known before. In His presence the penitent spirit, the meek and lowly heart, to hate sin, to believe in God and in a Father's love, all seemed easy. It was hearts drinking in this spirit, in sympathetic touch with this wonderful man that cried, "Shew us the Father and it sufficeth us." And when after His death and rising again, in answer to this faith, they received the gift of the Holy Ghost, bringing to their lives Divine power and to their hearts a new life, and to their works supernatural character, the Christ whom they had followed stood fully revealed to them as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. In our day we are very likely to invert this order and approach our religion from the theological standpoint. But not thus does Christ reveal Himself to the world. He comes in simple and lowly guise, as a man among men, not even making pronounced much less ostentatious claim to the Messiahship. He comes pouring the light of moral truth into the consciences of men from His life as well as from His words. He comes working the works of God as well as speaking words which were spirit and life. He comes telling men of the Father, and at the same time living among outcast sinners such a life of condescending grace that all weary souls sick of sin and longing for rest are drawn to Him as in Himself the very incarnation of the Father's

grace and mercy. Men feel with wonder the power of His presence, His words and His works, and then begin to say in their hearts, "Is not this the Christ?" Meanwhile He is continually speaking to them of the kingdom, unfolding its mysteries, opening up to their understanding its true nature. In this way the conviction grows upon them that this is the coming King, the Messiah. But all the while He does not commit Himself unto them, because their ideas as well as their hearts are still largely carnal. But with the chosen few He is gradually opening up clearer light and conceptions, unfolding by the imagery of nature in the incomparable form of parable the things of the Kingdom of God. But even they, when He dies upon the Cross, have almost lost faith. It is only the resurrection and Pentecost that finally prevail and found Christianity as a power of life in the souls of men. These two events first restore the faith of the disciples; secondly, give them true spiritual conceptions of the King and His kingdom; He is now "exalted a Prince and a Saviour to grant repentance unto Israel and remission of sins"; thirdly, give them full personal possession of the kingdom in their own hearts; and, lastly, make their preaching powerful for its establishment in the hearts of their fellow-men.

In this way the spiritual life of the first Christians became centred in Christ as before, as Jews it had been centred in the invisible God. "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me."

Faith in Him has brought this new life and power into their souls. Gradually out of this living faith there is unfolded to their understanding all that is implied in it, that He is God, one with the Father, God "manifest in the flesh," the Lord of the kingdom, and that His death is the world's atonement for sin. These doctrines were only the direct outcome of the personal revelation of Jesus as the Saviour. The revelation of Christ thus made was the revelation of God's full salvation for men. It included four grand constituent elements :

1. The Person of Christ.
2. His atoning work.
3. His mediatorial office.
4. The office and work of the Holy Spirit.

Out of this manifestation of Christ as the Saviour and of salvation in Him under the preaching of the Apostles there grew up—

1. A new doctrine of the individual spiritual life in Christ, and of the way of salvation.

2. Of the organisation and work of the Church, which was henceforth to represent God's chosen people in the world.

3. Of the outcome of this Divine kingdom both in this world and in the world to come.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

CHRISTIANITY enlarges and strengthens the world's religious faith, not so much by the addition of new teachings or doctrines presented by Jesus of Nazareth as by presenting to the world's faith and worship God manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. The grasping of this fact by a living faith with its corollaries of the atonement, the mediatorial office and the gift of the Holy Ghost, constitute the historical founding of Christianity. In this personality there was embodied the living exhibition of Divine holiness, giving the world at once its highest ideal of moral goodness and its deepest sense of sin. In Him was also embodied the infinite love of God bringing to religious faith the fulness of Divine mercy in the forgiveness of sins. The two fundamental elements of inward experience by which from the very first God had saved men from their sins were thus brought to full perfection in Christ Jesus. All ways and means by which this salvation was brought to men in the past were but imperfect foreshadowings of this. Christ was the reality.

This new faith of Christianity Paul sets forth in these words: "Who being in the form of God thought it not a booty to be eagerly retained to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." To this 1 Tim. iii. 16 gives us an excellent parallel. St John states it thus: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

This was certainly a new religious faith, a faith that at first seemed directly in the face of the old faith in one only living and true God. The word incarnation both expresses the faith and the foundation of its harmony with the old faith. We have now to consider some further facts of its appearance in the world as a religious faith.

The Incarnation.

This faith involves three elements:

1. An historic man.
2. An eternally pre-existent and Divine person incarnated in this man.
3. A supernatural birth and a consequent supernatural personality.

(1) Of the historic man the continuous church from the first century is the witness. The Church has existed from that date onward. It did not exist before that date. It was founded on faith in this person and the first believers were the companions of their Lord's earthly life. When in

the next generation some who had not seen him denied his historical reality, such doctrine was at once rejected as untrue. A living real man was the object of this first Christian faith. If additional evidence were needed we have it in Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny and other writers, men of the first historical rank within the century and immediately after. The testimony of the Church was placed on record in our gospels almost from the beginning. A monumental record in the next century was erected in the catacombs hidden away from the persecuting rage of enemies. There is not the slightest room for doubt that the faith of the Church centred around a real man, Jesus of Nazareth, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate.

(2) But that faith embraced the Deity of Christ as well as His humanity. In the fourth century it was defined with scientific subtlety and skill as follows :—The same perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, truly God, and the same truly man of a reasonable soul and body, consubstantial with the Father as to the Godhead, and the same consubstantial with us as to the manhood. "One and the same Christ; Son, Lord, Sole-begotten, of two natures unconfounded, unchanged, undivided, inseparable." Under our study of the doctrine of the Trinity we have already seen that this faith fully appeared in the Apostolic Age, and that it was founded upon the facts of the life of Christ as interpreted by the Holy Ghost in the new religious consciousness of the

Apostolic Church. These facts were especially the following :—

His own conscious claim of oneness with God.
His miraculous birth.
His sinlessness.
His supernatural intelligence.
His works of Divine power.
His resurrection.
The gift of the Holy Ghost.

It is not necessary to trace again the historical development of this faith in the preaching of the Apostles and the writings of the New Testament. It is sufficient to point to it as a fact that Christianity is essentially such a faith in God manifest in the flesh, and that it is on this account a new and distinct religious faith separated from Mosaism on the one hand and from all forms of natural religion on the other. It is not necessary to claim for this faith that it began as a rational demonstration. Its foundation was not reason, but faith. It was not a new philosophy but a religion, and the facts upon which it was founded all appeal to religious conviction rather than to reason. In fact this faith was a direct creation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. It was for them only to listen to the facts and yield to the convictions of their own consciences as quickened by the Spirit of God and this faith was perfected within. The faith was a religious as distinguished from an intellectual faith. It was indeed built upon the strongest historic facts that have ever appealed to the religious nature

of man as a revelation of God. Hence, though it was a faith which tested the religious sense of certainty to the utmost, yet it was a faith yielding the fullest assurance. It came to men in demonstration of the Spirit and in power.

In its very nature the verification of such a faith must depend upon the certainty of its historical foundations, for as to its inner contents philosophy no longer keeps us company. Religion has here passed beyond the region of mere intellectual discovery, and the incarnation as a fact is a purely supernatural fact.

And yet it is not necessarily unreasonable, much less contradictory to reason. Reason may say that it is too great and glorious to be possible. We grant that it surpasses all conceptions of reason. But even reason must admit that its historic grounds are a good warrant for religious faith, and that even to reason itself they afford a moral if not an absolute demonstration. But this is only the verification of this religious faith, not the basis upon which it rests. It is merely an answer to objections. We can only indicate one or two lines of this argument.

1. The conception of an incarnation was entertained by some of the world's best minds outside of Christianity and before its time. This of itself would indicate that it is not irrational. That which Greek philosophy rejected was not the idea of incarnation, but the absurd and immoral forms under which it was conceived. It was the baseness, the impurity, the unworthi-

ness which gave rise to the scepticism of Euripides, and on the other hand we find Plato dwelling with religious enthusiasm on the incarnation of perfect virtue.

2. It is psychologically quite as possible that the Divine and the human should co-operate in one personality as that soul and body should be so united. Mind and matter are diverse in their essential nature, God and man only in plenitude and perfection of being.

3. The historic results of Christianity both in the race and in the individual demonstrate the wonderful moral and religious power of this faith, and so prove that it is in harmony with our religious nature. In fact many diverse forms of religion, false as well as true, unite in attesting the longing of the human heart for this unity with God.

We are now prepared to study in greater detail the contents of this mysterious faith, especially in its bearing upon our salvation. It was for us men and for our salvation that the Son of God became man. What does the Incarnation imply in itself? This is a question not so much of faith as growing out of faith. It is the effort of the human mind more clearly to define its faith. (1) Does it involve a change in the Divine Being or in His essential attributes? To this our faith in the immutability of God gives at once a negative reply. We cannot conceive of any such change, either by the intermixture of human attributes with the Divine, or by the

limitation of the Divine attributes to human finiteness. In that which forms alike the basis of the personality of the Father and the personality of the Son as well as that of the Spirit, the Divine Essence with its attributes, there can be no change. This the faith of the Church clearly affirms, unless there be a departure from it in the Lutheran doctrine of *communicatio idiomatum*. The modern theory of depotentiation seems also opposed to this faith. This view holds a κένωσις, a voluntary resignation of the conscious possession of the Divine attributes, a passing of the Divine personality through a zero point in the incarnation, so that the little babe in Bethlehem was conscious only of the human, and gradually resumed the Divine as the human was able to bear it, returning to the plenitude of His Divine attributes only on His ascension to glory. As the attempt is made to found this view directly on the language of Scripture, and hence to present it as a matter of religious faith and not of theological speculation, it becomes necessary to examine the New Testament expressions on this point. Three principal passages will suffice:

1. Phil. ii. 7: "But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men." If here we refer the expression "emptied himself" to the contents of consciousness, it would seem to teach depotentiation. It would mean the laying aside of the conscious possession as well as of the outward manifestation of the Divine attributes, only to resume them again as given by the

Father. But the passage may refer solely to the outward manifestation, and is generally so taken by English interpreters. If the following clauses "taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men" are epexegetical, then the second interpretation is certainly correct; for in that case the whole passage refers, not to inner consciousness, but to manifest status or in the old English translations reputation. Paul is in this passage holding up our Lord as the model of the mind which denies itself for the good of others. But unconsciousness, utter oblivion of His Divine attributes, could not present such a sacrifice except once for all, and that before He became man. But full conscious possession of the Divine attributes, still bowing as a servant of the Father to all human infirmity and suffering and death, does present such a sacrifice in its most sublime form. It is saying, not under compulsion of necessity, but out of the deepest consecration, "Thy will be done." The whole passage thus seems to give the best sense as referring to manifestation or exercise of Divine powers rather than to conscious possession.

2. 2. In Heb. ii. 9-14 we think the true idea is not a change of the Divine to any lower grade of being, but a change to an inferior station before the universe. The same person in continuous conscious being is made a little lower than the angels, and then crowned with glory and honour. So also the phrase, "partook of the same," expresses rather a continuous identity than a

transition to what to consciousness would be equivalent to cessation of being.

3. 3. The third passage, "The Word was made" (or became) "flesh and dwelt among us," also implies the same continuous consciousness, and expresses nothing more than a change of form or sphere of life. The eternal Word takes to himself the form and life of man.

It thus appears quite unnecessary to assume the depotentiation theory so far as New Testament statements go. The faith there expressed does not seem to include or to demand for its explanation any such metaphysical conception. On the contrary, it rather seems to be excluded. Nor does the theory at all diminish the mystery of the incarnation in itself or make it more acceptable to reason. It is quite as easy to conceive of the Divine person taking into himself, *i.e.* into his consciousness the life of man in all its essential experiences from the cradle to the grave as an addition to his eternal fulness of existence, as to conceive the Divine consciousness resigning its own activity, passing in effect out of consciousness, becoming oblivious of itself, in order that it may be reconstructed under the limitations of human development.

The consideration of this theory has in part anticipated our second question—

2. Does the Incarnation involve a change in the personality of the Second Person? To answer this question we must return for a moment to the essential idea or to the definition of per-

sonality. We find it in that continuous self-conscious intelligence and will out of which a spiritual being acts. Self-consciousness in the entire exercise of its being is necessary to personality. Identity or continuity of this consciousness of self is the other essential element. It thus gathers up into conscious unity of being all the acts and states in which that personal being is manifested. Personality.

We are thus led to distinguish the continuous identical personality from the ever-varying acts and states which it claims as its own, and thus identifies with itself. They are not so much the personality as the manifestation of its activity, or its relation to environment, and so the content of its self-consciousness. These acts and states may arise from more than one nature. We are ourselves composed of soul and body, mind and matter; and yet these are so related to each other that the activities of both, as well as the results of their varying relations to environment, come forth in one self-conscious personality. I can be conscious of the movement of my arms, and at the same time of the purpose for which they were moved. In fact, our difficulty lies not so much in the conception of the personality of two or more elements united in one person as in the idea of a personality of one element or essence alone. We have no experience of the personality of disembodied spirit; and the antithesis of soul and body, as well as of the me and not me, enter so deeply into our human personality that some have

been disposed to deny the possibility of conscious personality apart from the body. This question, already considered under the personality of God, need not be resumed here. Whatever may be the content or character of a purely spiritual personality, it is certain that the human personality gives us direct knowledge of personality as uniting different elements of being in one personal life.

Turning now to the question of the relation of the Divine person to the incarnation, in the two fundamental elements of personality, self-consciousness, and identity or continuity, inasmuch as these spring directly from essential spiritual being and its attributes, again the faith of the Church affirms that there can be no change. The Christ is not a new person, but the eternal Son of God —the same identical person from eternity and in time. So St John quotes our Lord Himself: "O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." The personality is here identical and continuous.

There thus remains but one answer to our original question, what is implied in the incarnation, and with this answer all the direct statements of the gospel narratives seem to agree. The answer is this: The incarnation implies the taking up into the Divine personal consciousness of new content, consisting of all those acts and states which are the natural outcome of humanity. The simple gospel narratives plainly affirm these of Him: He ate; He slept; He was hungry,

thirsty, weary; He was sorrowful, was pained, was grieved or angry, rejoiced. He loved His friends, and sympathised with their sorrows. All human states and acts contingent to His particular life are attributed to Him, sin only excepted. This does not imply a change in the eternal or Divine personality, or a diminution of its contents in their infinite plenitude of being, but the adding of the finite to the infinite, which is not thereby increased. It is not a break in the continuity of the eternal, but the flowing into it of the finite, which adds not thereto but only gives it human form. How the infinite Divine and the finite human can coexist in the same consciousness in their seeming opposition we cannot tell. Infinite blessedness and human pain, infinite power and human weakness, infinite knowledge and human not knowing,—these and many other such opposites we cannot bring together in our conceptions, and yet they are contrasted rather than contradictory. And we see in the recorded facts and acts of His life that both are there—the infinite after the manner of God, who hideth Himself; the finite after the manner of man, who is seen and known. The antithesis is not a contradiction. This faith of the Church in Christ as God incarnate thus implies—

1. That Deity is capable of stooping to our finite humanity.

2. That humanity is capable of being lifted to unity with Deity.

3. That such unity actually took place in time

in a supernaturally prepared humanity in the person of Jesus Christ: Matt. i. 20; Luke i. 35.

What is the relation of this incarnation to the salvation which God hath prepared for the race? The positive answer to this question we shall consider under the head of the Atonement. We shall there find that it forms the foundation both in natural and moral law for that work. At this point we shall only consider another and modern view of the incarnation as in itself that which completes the work of human salvation.

In the language of one school of modern theology, the incarnation becomes itself the at-one-ment, as the unity, in the person of Christ, of God with man and of man with God. The Divine nature has lifted the human up into union and communion with itself. In and through Christ we are all made partakers of the Divine nature; and so in a higher and more perfect sense than that of creation, made sons of God as Christ Himself was the Son of God, the first begotten. Accompanying this is a strong emphasis upon the revelation of God in Christ, especially of His nature as love, and of His relation to His whole spiritual creation as our Father in Heaven.

This view, which we do not attempt to analyse or to define after any one thinker, is perhaps rather a tendency than a defined system. It may be related to a scheme of moral development for humanity largely ignoring sin and the fall, or it may regard this work as in itself the

restoration of the sinful and fallen race in Christ as their representative.

But although this view may express much truth under a beautiful analogy, it fails to give full force to the ethical elements of religion, and, like all pantheistic or semi-pantheistic systems, it loses the ethical in the natural which here becomes the mystical. It even obscures the doctrine of the incarnation itself, and in its effort to exalt humanity to God, it gives us a less distinct conception of the true deity of Christ.

It is not practically far removed from another and older view which in the language of the older theology magnified the prophetic office of Christ while it obscured or ignored the priestly, and was the outcome of a view which entirely denied the deity of Christ and the doctrine of incarnation.

We therefore regard the incarnation in the New Testament, not as in itself the atonement or reconciliation, but as a necessary step toward its accomplishment. It does indeed occupy a most prominent place in the living faith of the Christian, but always as a Divine act of humiliation, of merciful condescension, leading to salvation. Still more prominent in religious faith as expressed in the New Testament is the death of the incarnate Son of God. This is clearly the central point, the distinctive object to which the living faith of all the ages of Christianity is turned. "Far be it from me to glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which

The incarnation not itself the atonement — but a necessary step.

the world hath been crucified to me and I unto the world."

It is this which our theology has distinctively called the Atonement; and to this as an object of Christian faith we now turn.

CHAPTER V

THE ATONEMENT

WHY did the Son of God become man? The old answer of the creeds is "For us and for our sins"; St John's, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The redemption of fallen man from sin is the purpose of the incarnation as set forth in the faith of the New Testament.

We have seen that in all the earlier revelation of redemption, two elements were united, repentance and the forgiveness of sins. These two are fundamental. Men must be turned away from sin, and the guilt of the past must be removed. Unless we have both these we have no salvation; the preparatory dispensations all provided means whereby men might be led to repentance and receive remission of sins, with symbolic ordinances for the expression of both.

As in the line of Messianic prophecy we have the preparation for the coming of Christ among men as the King in His Kingdom, so in these preliminary provisions of salvation for men we have the preparation for the perfect work of Him who was "exalted a Prince and a Saviour to grant re-

pentance unto Israel and remission of sins." The moral and religious consciousness of men has in all ages borne witness to the fact that sin separates us from God. This is not a teaching of Christianity alone; it is a universal consciousness of humanity, expressed in all the great religions in so far as they are religions and not mere political systems. Some trace of its influence appears even in the lowest fetichism. If therefore religion would reunite man to God, sin must be taken away; and the means by which it is proposed to accomplish this constitute the true character of the religion. If Christianity presents to man a new object of religious faith in the incarnate Son of God, it so presents Him as redeeming man from sin, and thus Christ's redemption of the world from sin forms the central idea of Christianity. This redemption is wrought out through the Atonement which is the sequel to the incarnation as well as its purpose. The essential and universal idea which we now express by atonement is propitiation for sin. It implies that God is angry at sin, an idea from which we must not shrink, though we must not degrade it to the level of human selfish passion. The deepest intuitions of our moral and religious nature reveal to us this wrath of God. If there is any truth in religious faith or in moral conviction, this wrath is a fearful reality and expresses the eternal opposition of God to all sin. Atonement is that by which God's wrath may be averted, not from the sin,

but from the sinner; and if wrath against sin is an attribute of the Divine perfection, to avert wrath from the sinner must be at the same time to separate him from his sin.

The religious faith which thus can only be satisfied when it has found a true atonement for sin is founded in the convictions of our moral nature. It demands as the only possible way to the forgiving mercy of a holy God, an expiation for sin, and a propitiation for the sinner.

It has been usual to consider this whole subject from the forensic point of view. God is regarded sometimes as moral Governor, sometimes as Judge, and the sinner as guilty before His bar, or under sentence for his sin. Of course, an analogy of this kind may be readily constructed, and in a tropical way and to a limited extent it is used in the New Testament by St Paul who was familiar with Roman law. But the terms atonement, expiation, and propitiation are all purely religious, and quite alien to the field of jurisprudence. Religious forms of expression are also predominantly used of this work of Christ in the New Testament even by St Paul. If, therefore, our inductive method of appeal to religious faith and especially to the religious faith of the New Testament be the true one, in seeking the materials of our theology we shall throughout abide by religious and moral rather than by forensic considerations. In considering this subject we must think of God in His divinity of perfection and relation as God, and not under the imperfect and

human analogy of a governor, judge, or king. Again, that which the atonement brings to us from God is first and foremost the forgiveness of sins. Our religious faith seeks forgiveness of sins through Christ; "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins; not for ours only, but also for the whole world." This simple idea of forgiveness of sins, which is a Divine act since none can forgive sins but God only, must not be confused with human forensic acts, if we wish to grasp the truly religious conception of the propitiation by which forgiveness comes. By the atonement we understand that act or work of our Lord Jesus Christ centering in His death, whereby the forgiveness of sins becomes possible to a holy God and for sinful men.

In all religions of the ancient world we find some form of atonement for sin, something which men regard as an expiation before God. The greater the moral power of the religion the more prominent does this expiation become. In the Mosaic religion with its clearly defined consciousness of moral obligation, expiation filled a very large place. Every transgression even of ceremonial law had its expiation; and the laws of atonement and holiness were the very centre of the Levitical system. Atonement is thus not only an important and central element in religion, but it is like the idea of God an element by which the religion is largely characterised. In fact theology may be written from the atonement

as its centre, since in the true atonement for sin we have the most perfect revelation of God Himself.

For our Lord's atoning work the incarnation lays the foundation. This it does both in its relation to God as the result of His purpose and loving command, and in its relation to man by bringing the Son of God into our nature with its moral and natural relations to sin. The first relation lays the foundation for the moral power of the atonement. It is the outcome of the love of God to sinful men, and hence brings all the force of infinite love to bear on man to draw him back from sin to God. The second meets our sense of guilt; it is an offering and sacrifice made in our nature and on our behalf to God in virtue of which God is faithful and just to forgive sin. This is the atonement and at-one-ment in its two fundamental aspects, both of which recognise a moral separation from God, a separation by sin in which we are estranged from God, our minds at enmity with God, and God is angry with us with a just wrath.

This work we must study as a fact clearly set forth in the New Testament, a fact upon which the spiritual life, *i.e.* the living faith of the Christian Church is founded, in fact the central fact in Christianity, and yet a fact apprehended not by sense or by reason, but by living faith through the revealing of the Holy Ghost. This revelation is made in the heart of every living Christian. But it was made first of all in the hearts of the Apostles themselves; and when

Christ was thus made to them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, they so set Him forth to the faith of a sinful world. But even before this revelation in the hearts of His disciples the consciousness of His work in its relation both to God and man must have been in the mind of Christ Himself, perhaps not after the limited logical definitions of our theology, but as an infinite love to God and man, giving Himself in suffering and death to save the world. Such consciousness must surely have found expression, and that expression have been remembered beyond all other words which fell from His lips, and have entered into the very heart of the living faith of the Church. The most important end of study must therefore be to apprehend this work in the light of its fixed statement by our Lord and His Apostles. We thus limit ourselves to the New Testament study of the subject, not because it does not appear in the Old Testament, but first, because the New Testament statements refer directly and primarily to the work of Christ, the statements of the Old Testament to the sacrificial and prophetic types by which it was foreshadowed, and the way for its apprehension prepared; secondly, because the fulfilment is more easily understood than the prophecy, the fully developed faith than that which is as yet only in germ. We therefore cultivate both brevity and certainty by adopting this method.

This study must be pursued in the spirit of a

living faith; here above all points in theology the light of the revealing Spirit is needed. It is emphatically the apprehension of faith which gives us our material here. It is as a religious faith that we are to study the atonement, a faith founded in the words and death of our Lord, and set forth by His Apostles as the living faith of their own hearts. Our object must be to apprehend this faith in its completeness.

1. In its relation to the moral constitution under which it is possible.

2. In itself, the act or work by which atonement is effected, its moral quality, its valency or force as an atonement.

3. In its relation to human probation and salvation.

The Moral Constitution under which Atonement is possible.

This is very clearly set forth by St Paul in the fifth chapter of Romans, verses 12-19 inclusive: Rom. 5/12–19. "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all sinned: for until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift, for if by the trespass of the one the many died,

much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment came of one unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification. For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ. So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men unto condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of one shall the many be made righteous."

Many other passages touch upon or harmonize with the ideas here presented, but as this is the most direct and complete statement, we will formulate our doctrine from it.

1. It sets forth as a fact that it is possible for the whole race to be affected for evil or for good, for sin or for salvation, by the act of one member of that race.

This implies (*a*) a moral unity of the race; (*b*) a united or common responsibility as distinguished from individual responsibility.

In proof of this common responsibility Paul cites the fact that it has taken effect even where individual responsibility was not fully developed

(verses 13, 14). It thus precedes and underlies our individual responsibility. This law of our moral constitution which makes the whole responsible for the individual act, appears not merely in this statement of one case by St Paul, but in the whole experience of human life. We find humanity everywhere presenting itself in these moral unities. The family is the fundamental unity. Any one of its members may bring untold blessing or woe upon the whole. This responsibility especially, though not exclusively, devolves upon the parents. The children suffer for the sins of the parents or they are blessed by their virtues. Our whole law of inheritance is based upon it, and thus our jurisprudence recognises its essential justice. But these moral unities appear in wider circles. The village, the community, the tribe, the city, the nation, are all examples extending the law until we are prepared by the facts of history to accept Paul's statement that the "transgression of one man brought judgment (penal consequences) upon all" the race, and that "through the righteousness of one a free gift came to all" the race. This passage implies (*c*) that in the history of mankind there actually has been a probation of the race as a race, based upon this moral unity and common responsibility, as well as a probation of each individual, and that this probation of the race is not only a continuous fact in the moral judgments of history, but had its definite historical result at the very origin of the race, in conse-

quence of which well-known penal results have descended to the whole race. It is on the basis of this law that he also affirms a second great probational event in the history of the race, out of which shall flow the world's salvation. The law of moral unity of common responsibility and of race probation is thus clearly established as a fact, both by this scriptural statement and by the observation of history, and its justice is recognised by the common consent of mankind.

One or two points of error, however, must be guarded against in our application and interpretation of this law.

1. It must not be so extended as to destroy individual probation. Paul, who is for us the chief expounder of this law, also teaches as the fundamental law of individual probation, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7). So in the Epistle to the Romans i. 18-21 and ii. 29: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse: because that knowing God, they glorified Him, not as God, neither gave thanks." Here is a most complete exposition of universal individual respon-

sibility and probation, which is not destroyed by any advantageous or adverse temporal conditions.

2. 2. Upon this individual probation alone eternal consequences are made to depend. Romans ii. 6-10: "Who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; but glory and honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek; for there is no respect of persons with God." In no single case is the race probation spoken of as the direct cause of eternal penalty to the individual. This is always and everywhere referred to the individual responsibility and probation. The consequences which flow from race probation belong to this life. They may largely affect the advantages or disadvantages of individual probation, but they are never spoken of as absolutely determining the individual probation, or supplanting or eliminating it. Notwithstanding Adam's sin or Christ's righteousness, each man must give account of himself to God, and for his own sin or good works be judged for eternity. The law of race responsibility is thus limited by the law of individual responsibility, and finally merges into it. The race probation

prepares for, lays the foundation of, and makes way for the final individual responsibility.

These are the facts of the case recognised in Scripture, evident in history, and acknowledged by the common conscience of the race.

3. In studying the penal consequences which follow from race responsibility, and to which the whole race are held, we must distinguish clearly between natural and moral law. Natural law may be founded in moral law, and may give effect to moral law, but it does not thereby become moral law. Natural law is an order of cause and effect operated by the forces of nature; moral law is an order of right, operated by the principles of justice. The operation of a natural law may be counteracted by the force of nature upon which it depends; that of a moral law, only by the principle of justice upon which it depends. A natural law, by the aid of which effect is given to a moral law, may be suspended, and yet the moral law itself remain in full force in other ways. In the same way a natural law, by which effect is given to a moral law, may have a much wider scope than this particular moral end which it serves in this particular case. Heredity and death are both natural laws used in giving effect to a moral law in the probation of the race, but not to be confounded with the moral law itself. The bearing of this upon the doctrine of the Atonement will appear presently. We have not delayed to consider the justice of this moral constitution in itself. It has already been somewhat discussed

under the doctrine of responsibility. It is, certainly, a fact in human life. It is, we think, sufficiently approved as God's right order by a consideration of the wonderful blessings which flow from it. It is the foundation of all the altruistic virtues. Every man under it becomes his brother's keeper. Individual responsibility without it could not attain its most God-like development. If it made the fall possible, it also made possible salvation. If it has entailed a long heritage of ills, it has raised up a countless army of workers, together with Christ, in saving others even by dying themselves. The fact that man's sin turns it into a curse cannot reflect upon the great and wise and good intent and glorious final result of the purpose of God.

The passage upon which we have based our study of the moral constitution of the race sets forth two supreme events in the race probation. One is the sin of the first man, in consequence of which penal consequences rest upon the whole race. The other is the work of Christ, in consequence of which redemption comes to the race. This last we must now consider.

The Work of Christ by which Atonement is effected.

This is clearly set forth in the New Testament under various forms of expression. We naturally first of all turn to the words of our Lord Himself. It was after He had commenced to show to His disciples that He must be crucified, and the third

day rise again; that in setting before them the true way of spiritual greatness, He urges them each to the life of self-denying service, setting before them His own example in these words:— "Even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." His redeeming work is here presented as a life of service, terminated by the giving of His life. This work is here founded on the incarnation: He came for this purpose, and it is linked in with the law of moral unity, by which we all serve one another, and are members one of another. Again, at the institution of the great central ordinance of Christianity, our Lord speaks still more definitely of His redeeming work: "He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the Covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins." As St Mark tells us, this solemn institution in remembrance of His death was made immediately after He had once more warned His disciples of the near approach of this event. The blood of the Covenant could therefore be no other than His own blood, shortly to be shed.

To this record must be added the words recorded by St Luke, spoken after the resurrection: "That the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

These words all set forth the suffering life and

the death of our Lord as constituting that to which the faith of a sinful world should be turned for forgiveness of sins. This was to Christ's own thought the crowning act of moral glory, the thing to be continually remembered by His followers, the necessary work for the Christ, and the basis upon which remission of sins was to be preached unto all the nations.

Let us now take a passage from Heb. ii. 14-17, showing how His followers in the Apostolic Age interpreted His words, and expressed their own faith for salvation: "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner took part of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily not of angels doth He take hold, but He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham. Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." This passage, again, clearly sets forth the death of our Lord as the central fact in the work of redemption; it also clearly states the necessity of the incarnation, both for the redemption or deliverance of man, and for that of atonement or propitiation toward God. It goes even further: it makes the incarnation the necessary preliminary to that death by which the power of death is to be overthrown. Both aspects

The work of Christ by which the atonement is effected.

of the law of moral unity or solidarity are thus applied to Christ and His work. He must be made like unto His brethren in all things, in order that He may be their faithful and merciful high priest. Only by entering into the solidarity of the race can He help and save the race. But under the same law, by becoming one with us, and by making us, in this sense, His brethren, He becomes liable to our liabilities as a race. All the consequences (sin only excepted) expressed by Paul in that sentence, "In Adam all die," and again, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," pass over to him. It is thus that the incarnation is here spoken of as His taking part in "flesh and blood," the mortal elements of our nature, because in this way the death comes to Him by which He destroys him that had the power of death.

Another important statement of the supreme act by which Christ redeems the world, and in which it is set forth in all its steps from the pre-existent glory with the Father to the final mediatorial glory on the throne of the universe is found in Phil. ii. 6-11. This passage like Matt. xx. 28, begins in a setting forth of the life of highest moral glory. The Church is exhorted to love unity and humility, all expressed in "not looking each of you to his own things," the selfish individual life, "but each of you also to the things of others," the altruistic life. Of this Christ Himself gives us the supreme example in the very work of redemption itself. ("Who being in the)

form of God counted it not a prize (a thing to be seized or held fast as a booty), to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea the death of the Cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted Him and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

In this remarkable passage the work of Christ, as it appeared to the religious faith of St Paul, is set forth both in its successive steps and in the moral character from which springs its power and its glory.

1. It begins with an estate of pre-existent glory spoken of here as being in the form of God, and being on an equality with God; and, in John xvii. 5, as the glory which He had with the Father before the world was.

2. A resignation of this glorious estate, expressed here by the words, "he emptied himself," and elsewhere by St Paul, "Though He was rich yet for your sakes He became poor that ye through His poverty might become rich."

3. Entrance upon a life of service; "taking the form of a servant;" expressed again by our Lord Himself, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

4. It is to this end that He becomes man; "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth."

5. Being found in fashion as a man, He humbles Himself and becomes obedient to all human obligation, of which Matthew gives a single illustration recording his own words at baptism, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

6. This obedience is carried "even unto death, yea the death of the cross," the extreme form of death as the penalty of sin. And so again His own words attest, "The cup which the Father hath given Me shall I not drink it?" and again, "Nevertheless not My will but Thine be done."

Thus these passages centre the redeeming work unmistakably in His death upon the Cross. The same appears from all those passages which speak of Christ as giving or offering Himself for us, and those which speak of His giving offering and laying down His life for us. By the side of these may be placed those which speak of redemption through His blood the sprinkling of His blood, and to these may be added His own words, "My blood of the Covenant." In accord with this we see the shadow of the cross hanging over Him as He approaches the end and to this all the evangelists give testimony.

With the historic fact thus clearly defined before us, we must next turn to consider this redeeming and atoning work in its moral character. As preparatory to this we must

note that it is a bearing of the penalty of human sin. The passages in which this is asserted are peculiarly important as linking His sufferings with the law of human responsibility, and distinguishing them from the sufferings of a martyr or witness for the truth. They are the following: Heb. ix. 28; 1 Peter ii. 24; iii. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 3; Rom. iv. 25, but especially Gal. iii. 10-14. "For as many as are of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone which continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them. Now that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident; for, the righteous shall live by faith; and the law is not of faith; but he that doeth them shall live in them. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree; that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." The curse is the penalty of broken law (v. 10). "Christ became a curse" on our behalf, "for us."

It is going beyond the legitimate force of these passages to contend that Christ suffered the penalty of any individual sin, or of the personal sins of any individual man, or the united penalties of the sins of all men, or of any class of men, or the equivalent for these penalties, or the anger of God, or the torments of the lost. There is not

The Work of Christ by which the atonement is effected — Moral aspects of atonement —

the remotest reference to any of these things in any of these passages. On the other hand, God with this Son declares Himself as always well pleased, never more so than when He was fulfilling the will of the Father by obeying unto death even the death of the Cross. If we are asked what then is the meaning of Gethsemane and the cry of Calvary we turn to Heb. v. 7-9: "Who in the days of His flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and having been heard for His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered; and having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation." He was truly man. As a man He felt all the bitterness of death in its most cruel form. As a man He needed to be saved out of death. Even though the Son of God yet was He disciplined in obedience (as all men are under our moral order) by the things which He suffered. He suffered death, the universal penalty of sin appointed to all men in this life, nothing more, but nothing less. He tasted death for every man. Not "in our stead," for the preposition can scarcely be held in sound scholarship to have that significance, certainly not to be limited to it, but "*on our behalf.*" Those who think that this is not enough have never realized what it is for man to die.

This supreme act of Christ by which He makes atonement for our sins thus stands forth as an

act of obedience to God's law in submitting to death as the penalty of sin imposed upon a sinful race with whom He had voluntarily made Himself one for their salvation. The act thus takes on a moral and religious character. It is an act taking place not under natural but under moral law, a voluntary act performed under the impulse of the highest moral motives, and a religious act as the will of God is its supreme end and it is done in loving and obedient relation to Him. In this moral and religious character this act presents itself to the faith of the New Testament writers as follows:—

1. As an act or work of infinite charity or love. It is love to all sinners: "For the love of Christ constraineth us," because we thus judge that one died for all. It is love to His Church, His own, His friends: "Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for it." "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end"; "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It is love to each individual man, for He "loved me and gave Himself up for me." It is infinite love, "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."

2. It is this love obeying the infinite love of the Father. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life," and this Son declares, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to

The Atonement an act of moral & religious character.

accomplish His work." And again, "I am come down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." In this way "God commendeth His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"; "not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

3. It is love making infinite sacrifice to fulfil this love and yield this obedience. We have already quoted 2 Cor. viii. 9 and Phil. ii. 5, etc., expressing Paul's religious faith on this point. To this we need only add our Lord's own words, "I lay down My life for the sheep."

4. It is love sacredly fulfilling all law. At the very outset of His ministry He says, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." In the very heart of the sermon on the mount we read, "Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." As He passes to the cross His last words were, "O my Father, if this cannot pass away except I drink it, Thy will be done."

It is thus the world's supreme work of righteousness, including every element which goes to make up the beauty of holiness as the highest and greatest thing in the universe, and as infinitely precious before God.

We now come to the greatest question, "Wherein lies the power of this work as an atonement before God, as the propitiation for our sins? How does it make it possible for God to forgive sin?"

First, note carefully what is to be accomplished

by the atonement. It is not simply the remission of penalty. It is not the allowing of the sinner to escape punishment. It is true forgiveness. It is the bringing of the sinner back to his place in the heart of God. It is God's receiving him again as His child. Read the 15th of St Luke for Christ's own presentation of this. The atonement must make it possible for God to forgive sins.

Again, this does not imply that there is not in the heart of God the grace, the love which desires to receive the lost child back. This is the very fountain-head of the atonement, "God so loved the world." But it does imply that there is a bar, something which hinders God's love from taking effect. Now this bar must be either—

(*a*) In man the sinner, who will not, or cannot, be reconciled to God because he chooses to remain in sin; or,

(*b*) In the necessities of the moral government of God, whose authority must be maintained over the creatures who have not sinned; or,

(*c*) In the nature of God Himself, who, because He is holy and just, cannot forgive sin without atonement. In other words, the atonement must enable God to be "just and the justifier of him that believeth" (Rom. iii. 26).

We do not hesitate to accept the latter as the only possible final ground of the necessity of the atonement, first, on the basis of the passage of Scripture just quoted; and again, because in the ultimate analysis both the other grounds must resolve themselves into this.

1. Why should the persistence of the sinner in his sins be a bar to forgiveness? Either because God, as holy and just, cannot receive such into His favour, or because to do so would undermine the authority of His government. The first then necessarily falls into the second or third.

2. But why should the government of God be undermined by the forgiveness of the sinner either penitent or impenitent? Either because it indicates a lack of power in God to punish, or because it indicates a lack of disposition. In the first case, the authority of God's government would rest on fear, a position which cannot be accepted by those who believe with St John that God is love. In the second case, the authority would be undermined because of lack of disposition, *i.e.* of justice, of inflexible will to do right. That is, God's government would be undermined because injustice would be done, and it is maintained, not as a matter of expedience, but of right. If, then, we believe in right as an eternal and primary principle in God, and do not regard it as a secondary thing, a wise form of goodness, then in this lies the final bar to forgiveness, and the atonement must make it *right* for God to forgive sin. If it is right, then it cannot shake the throne of God founded on the right.

How does the work of Christ make it right for God to forgive sin? Our question, as thus carried back, excludes for answer all moral influence theories of the atonement. Moral influence expresses the relation of the atonement to man,

most important in its own place. We are asking, "What is its relation to God in His own attributes, especially in His attribute of justice, and to that attribute as ultimate, *i.e.* viewing things as right in virtue of their own character, and not merely of certain consequences. If the penalty of sin and the condemnation of the sinner are simply expedients for the maintenance of government, then maintain the authority of government in some other way and you may dispense with them. But if they are of eternal equity,

How does the Atonement secure Equity in the Pardon of the Sinner?

The underlying principle of the various attempts to answer this question will appear in three examples:

1. Anselm says sin robs God of His just honour. The atonement pays back this honour to God as it would have been paid back had we ourselves suffered the penalty.

2. Later on, the Calvinistic theologians developed this into the substitutionary theory. Christ suffered the exact penalty or the equivalent for the penalty of the sins of the elect, and hence they are released.

3. Finally by the use of an analogy or metaphor this was converted into the commercial view of the atonement. Sin is a debt. Christ paid the debt. We are released.

Before investigating the scriptural foundations

How does the worth of Christ's work as a right for us to forgiveness?

of these answers we may submit them to analysis to see whether they really supply what we need.

1. Anselm's view finds the guilt of sin in that it robs God. But is that its full guilt? Is not the right, that moral equity which is in God and in all His works, the very principle which demands that amends should be made to God's honour? The evil of sin is more than the violation of personal right even of God. It is the violation of an eternal principle in God and in all His works. That principle not only enjoins the right and forbids the wrong, but it attaches to right its equitable reward, and to wrong its equitable penalty, not as an expedient, but as a matter of right. Now, that which right demands is not that the wrong be repaid (that it does demand wherever possible, but here it may be impossible), but that a new right be carried into effect, viz., *the equity of penalty*. It was this phase of the problem which developed the substitution theory of the reformers. They held that in the satisfaction of the penalty of justice, the suffering of penalty may be transferred to a substitute. If the substitute suffers the penalty, then the original transgressor may go free. The principle upon which this view is based is not materially altered, whether we consider the penalty as identical or as equivalent in value. In either case it is held that satisfaction is made, the debt is paid.

It has been objected to this view, and very properly, that it involves a moral impossibility if taken in its extreme form of identical penalty.

The penal consequences of sin are thus defined in the Shorter Catechism: "All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse and so made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever." With this catalogue before us the point seems well taken that it is impossible that Christ should have suffered all this. The greater part of those who hold this view in consequence fall back upon some form of equivalence.

2. But it is again objected that the very principle of substitution, instead of satisfying justice, violates justice; that guilt consists essentially of two elements, the *culpa* or obligation to penalty, and the *poena* or penalty itself; that while the latter may be transferred, the former in moral delinquency is personal and cannot be transferred; another cannot become blameworthy for my sin, and as the bond of justice which attaches penalty to sin lies in the blameworthiness, that bond cannot be satisfied, will not attach itself, even though another suffer the penalty; that in this respect there is an essential difference between sin and a debt. Another may place himself under obligation in justice for my debt. He cannot do so for my crime, except by becoming *particeps criminis*, and even then it is his own part in the crime for which he is responsible. Even in human law, where relative justice and the prevention of crime are the objects sought, this principle is not admitted in relation to crime, although freely applied to debt. Much

less then could it apply in Divine law where absolute justice is demanded.

3. It is objected to this principle that if valid at all it secures not forgiveness conditioned on penitence and faith, but absolute discharge. This was freely accepted by the reformers who held that this substitution taking place only on behalf of the elect, absolute discharge was secured; and that regeneration, justification, and sanctification were but the effectual operations by which the discharge was to be carried into effect, like the opening of the doors and the knocking off of the chains of the prisoners.

But while this objection is thus not absolutely fatal in Calvinistic theology, it is so in Arminian. We see no way in which the principle of substitution can be applied except as involving the absolute security of those for whom it is made. Forgiveness is no longer forgiveness, but legal discharge, under this conception. This is not what is required in atonement, *but a propitiation*, that is, righteous motive to, or reason for, *forgiveness*. It would thus seem that under the force of these two objections the substitutionary view must fall to the ground as failing to meet two essential scriptural ideas, the satisfaction of Divine justice on the one hand, and a real Divine forgiveness conditioned on repentance and faith on the other. But insuperable as these objections appear, if Scripture sustained this view we should be forced to suspend judgment. But when we come to examine the scriptural foundation for it we

think it will be found to be far from satisfactory.

The view is, however, supposed to be sustained by three classes of New Testament passages: First, those which speak of Christ dying for us, suffering for us, etc. One of the most striking of these is 1 Peter iii. 18: "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God." The idea of substitution in this and all similar passages is supposed to be in the preposition here used ὑπερ. But the preposition ὑπερ does not necessarily imply anything as to the manner of carrying the work into effect. It does assert that the *benefit* or *advantage* of the work of "the righteous" accrues to "the unrighteous." But it is reading into it more than its legitimate force to make it say that such benefit is further secured by an act in which the benefactor takes the place of the benefited. In the only two passages in the New Testament in which ὑπερ was translated "instead of," viz., 2 Cor. v. 20, Phil. 13, the Revised Version has the more correct, "on behalf of." This does not imply any idea of substitution in person, but only in results or benefits.

Second, the next class of passages is that in which the preposition ἀντι is used. This is supposed to imply an absolute substitution. In this case no objection lies against the meaning assigned to the preposition. It certainly commonly signifies "instead of," "in the place of."

And if in the passage in St Peter just quoted, or in any similar passage, Christ had been said to have suffered or died, αντι ημων, substitutionary suffering would have been strongly asserted. But this preposition is used only in three passages, and in all cases in the same connection of thought. These are Matt. xx. 28, Mark x. 45, and 1 Tim. ii. 6. If in the first two passages, which are in reality one saying of the Master, it had been said, "to give His life," or "to die," αντι ημων, then the substitutionary theory could be founded on the words. But that is not said, but this, "to give His life as a ransom price instead of the many"; the substitution is not of the person who gave his life, but of the act, or of the life given, as "a ransom price." It is the ransom price which, *for the purpose of deliverance*, takes the place of the person delivered.

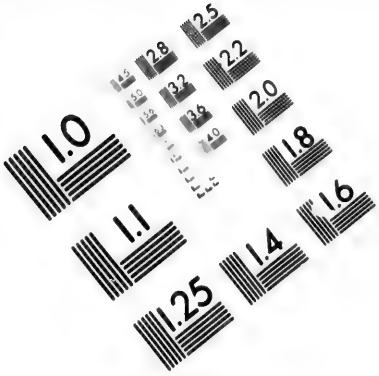
The same idea appears in the passage, "Who gave himself a ransom price instead, ὑπερ ('on behalf of'), of all to be testified in due time." You note the difference in terms: in the first, αντι "instead of" "*the many*" (redeemed); in the last, "a ransom price" to take the place, not "of all," but "for the benefit of all." In all these passages the thought centres not on *an atonement offered to God*, but on *a redemption provided for man*. Christ's death is *the ransom price in our stead* as delivering us from sin, "*for the benefit of all*," but *instead of all that believe*.

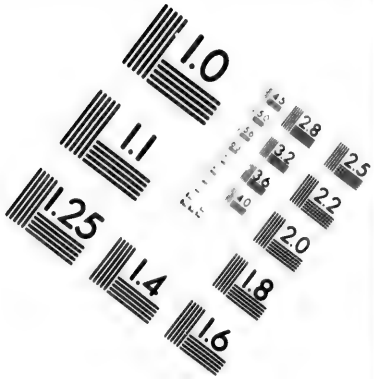
The word "ransom" expresses exactly and beautifully the power of Christ's death toward

man. But its valency toward God is expressed by the word "propitiation," ἱλαστηριον, an entirely different idea, and we have no right to confuse the two, or to extend the figure of ransom beyond that which it directly illustrates, *our deliverance.* To ask to whom the ransom price was paid, is to carry the figure beyond its scriptural use.

We are therefore led to carry our question back once more to the New Testament for answer, and ask is there any light upon it? How does the work of Christ make it right or just for God to forgive sins? The answer can, we think, be found in the passages already quoted from Romans v. and Phil. ii.

In the first of these passages Paul is discussing this whole question, both of the fall and of the recovery of man, from the ethical or moral standpoint. This certainly touches both its relation to God and man. It is the ethical quality, the wrong in sin, which makes it mighty toward God and man. The ethical quality in sin Paul expresses by two words. First, related to moral law, it is "transgression"; second, related to God, "disobedience." So the ethical quality of Christ's work he expresses by two corresponding words. Toward moral law or principle, it is δικαιωμα, the fulfilment of law, that which it prescribes; toward God it is "obedience." In transgression lies the condemning power of Adam's act; in righteousness, the restoring power of Christ's work; in disobedience, that which





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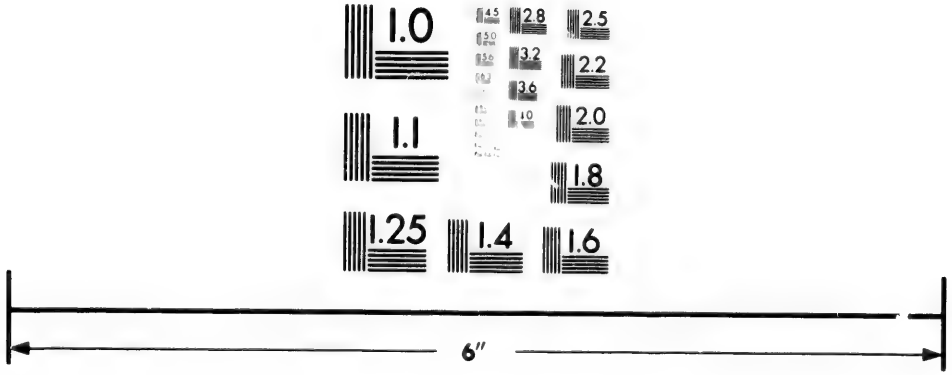

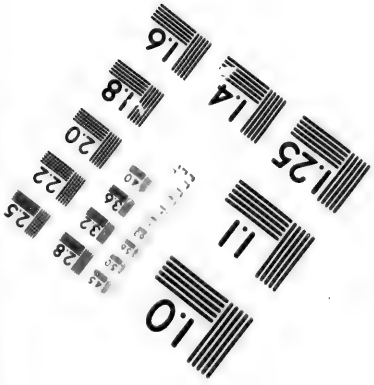

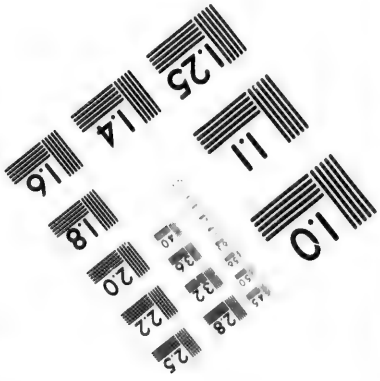

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offended God; in obedience, that which propitiates Him.

The other passage (Phil. ii. 6, etc.) sets forth the ethical side of the work of Christ as an example to us, and at the same moment as claiming from God the lofty dignity and right to the power which He exercises as Mediator. His mediatorial throne, His power on earth to forgive sins, is the just reward of His infinite self-sacrifice in obedience to the loving command of that Father who "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," who "sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." It is in virtue of the merit of His work, its infinite desert, that remission of sins is preached through His name among all nations. It is after He had finished this work, even before He ascended into Heaven, that He Himself said, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations." To the same effect are the words of St Peter (Acts ii. 33, etc.). "Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath poured forth this which ye see and hear," *i.e.* the spirit of sonship upon man.

The sum, then, of these passages is this, that God the Father, in reward of the loving obedience, and self-sacrifice, and fulfilment of the claims of law, of His Son, grants Him as just reward the power to dispense the forgiveness of sins and

power to become the sons of God, in spite of the demerit of their sins, to all who believe in His name. It is not in virtue of individual substitutionary sacrifice, but in virtue of the merit of His obedience and loving self-sacrifice, and fulfilment of law, even by death, that God has placed Him in that position of supreme mediatorial power as our High Priest, in which He shall gather a company which no man can number, out of every people and tribe and nation, and that the Father forgives the sins of these for His name's sake, and makes them sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

To put it then in one word, it is not the suffering of an equivalent penalty which cancels sin, but the *merit* of a work of infinite *moral value*, which at once honours God by loving *obedience* to the command of His love, and *by laying down life at that command*, honours law by meeting its every *demand on Him as one with our race*. This makes it right for God, first, to enter into relations of mercy to the whole race, in whose nature and for whose sake this work was wrought; and second, to forgive and accept everyone who comes in His name for mercy.

In this way it is justice that satisfies justice. The higher justice not only counterweighs the lower, but lifts the scale in which the sinner stands weighted with his sins up to God and heaven. The link which binds the work of Christ then to God is the link of just reward.

It is right to God *for Christ's sake* to forgive sins.

III. *The Relation of the Atonement to Man's Probation and Salvation.*

But we must now consider more fully the relation which binds us to Christ's work.

We have already seen how Christ in the moral order of our united nature bound Himself to us as a race by taking upon Him our nature. It was in virtue of this that He was called on to suffer the final penalty of the sinning race, *i.e.* death, and it is in virtue of this that He has opened up the mercy of God unconditionally to the whole race, and placed the whole race *on a new and gracious probation.* We have now to consider the terms of this probation, and how it carries us up into *a new and higher unity of humanity whose head is Christ*, and whose issues are eternal salvation. Before entering on this final relation of atonement, let us examine those Scriptures which set forth its unconditional benefits in the gracious probation of the entire sinful race :—

1. As an unconditional result of Christ's work there is a universal resurrection. 1 Cor. xv. 22 : "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." This universal resurrection is for the purpose of judgment. "We must all appear before the *judgment seat of Christ*, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10). So also our Lord Him-

self. John v. 28, 29: "Marvel not at this for the hour cometh when all that are in the tombs shall hear *His voice* and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." The universal resurrection is thus directly subservient to *a universal probation under the mediatorial authority of Christ.*

2. As an unconditional result of the work of Christ, light comes to all men. John i. 9: "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This light founds probation. John iii. 19: "This is the judgment that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Thus the work of Christ for our race provides the beginning and the ending of probation, universal light and universal judgment through that light.

3. Next we have in this work of Christ a universal provision of Divine grace. Titus ii. 12-14: "For the grace of God, saving for all men, hath been made manifest, instructing us" (*i.e.* giving us moral light and discipline) "in order that," etc. Here then we have in connection with the atonement *a saving course of probational life and grace provided for all men.*

4. Next, in accordance with universal gracious provision of probation, we have provision for possible salvation of every man. John iii. 16: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him

should not perish but have eternal life." So 1 John ii. 2; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Rom. v. 18, etc.

5. In accordance with this universal probation, and these provisions of light and grace and possible salvation, God wills and is working for the salvation of the world. 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Cor. v. 19: "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times." "To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

These are, according to Scripture, the universal provisions of the atonement, *i.e.* its results. Let us see how they correspond to the universal results of Adam's sin, and hence how they may spring directly and unconditionally by the law of race unity from the work of Christ in our nature and on our behalf.

Universal results of Atonement vs. universal results of Adam's sin.

(1) If universal death could come into the world as the result of the sin of one man, certainly, under the same law, and with equal or even greater justice, a universal resurrection may come as the result of the righteousness of one man.

(2) If darkness, moral blindness, has fallen

upon our world in Adam, surely truth, moral light, may come through Christ by the same law.

(3) If a law of sin in our members has come to all through Adam, a law of grace through the Holy Spirit may come through Christ (Acts ii. 17).

(4) If the sin of Adam brought the possibility of eternal condemnation to the whole world (Rom. v. 18), surely the righteousness of Christ may bring the possibility of salvation within the reach of all.

(5) If the sin of Adam brought in a reign of sin and death, so the work of Christ brings in a kingdom of grace and life (Rom. v. 21).

Finally, if the sin of Adam destroyed the conditions and possibilities of the original probation granted to the race, surely on the same law the work of Christ may lay the foundations of a new and gracious probation, under which men may rise to all the possibilities of their being.

We must now consider what that probation is, and how it is related to the atoning work of Christ.

Without entering into the nature of probation in general, which will be discussed in another chapter, it is sufficient to note the fact so fully declared in Scripture, that the condition of the new probation is *faith* (John iii. 18; Acts x. 43; Rom. iii. 21, 26). Here the Lord Himself, speaking through John, and Peter and Paul unite. If at times repentance on the one side as the preparation for this faith, and baptism on the other as

The condition of the new probation is Faith.

the profession of this faith, are associated with it, it is only as the perfecting of faith that they are so presented. Faith is the essential condition of the Christian probation.

Again, this faith is personally in Christ. The personal Saviour is the centre and object and foundation of this faith. Our Lord Himself generally uses faith, the noun, in the absolute and generic sense. But the verb "believe" (πιστευειν), He occasionally applies to Himself, "believing in," or "on me," though in the synoptic gospels generally used in the absolute sense. But in St John's Gospel, thirty-nine passages, about one-half the whole number, give us "believe in or on Christ." Nearly this same proportion holds in the Acts and Epistles. So in the Acts and the Epistles, the word faith, used absolutely in the large number of cases, is when the object is mentioned, in nineteen instances, "faith in or of Christ," in three, "faith in or toward God," and in one case, "faith in His (Christ's) blood." This fact makes it quite evident that to the mind of the New Testament writers, the personal Christ was the object of faith rather than any abstract conception of the Atonement, on the one hand, or any specific declaration of promise on the other. The Atonement was the work of Christ, and the promises were the words of Christ, and the faith which believed in *Him* included both. The single expression, "faith in His blood," does in one case point to the Atonement as the object of faith. There the Atonement is set forth as a propitiatory

offering. "Whom God has set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood." So in the parallel passage: "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Thus even this passage does not separate Christ from His work. He is the offering and the offerer, and "faith in His blood" is faith in Himself, as He gives Himself a propitiatory offering to God. All that we have already said about the moral value of His work applies directly to this offering and sacrifice.

According to the teaching of the New Testament then the new probation established by Christ's work for the whole race makes individual acceptance with God depend upon a continuous personal faith, which faith takes hold of Christ, not only as giving Himself for the whole world, but as giving "Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). How does this act of faith bring me thus into special and individual relation to Christ and His work for my salvation by the forgiveness of my sins?

We have already seen that by the general moral law, explained at the beginning of our study, the general benefits which flow to the race from the Atonement come through Christ's uniting Himself to the race, restoring it to all the possibilities of spiritual life. It is under the same law that each individual is personally linked to Christ for the personal benefits of the Atonement. Faith is the instrument of union with Christ. "Christ dwells in our hearts by faith,"

and we by faith are grafted into Him—the living vine. We are "members of His body," we are "His brethren," we are "His saints," "His elect," "His own," "His peculiar people," "His church." All these easily-recognised Scripture terms express an inner unity with Christ, in virtue of which the full benefits of the Atonement are conferred—no longer as a matter of universal unconditional grace, but as a matter of gracious probation. "If children, heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him that we may be also glorified together." It is at this point that the Church, for nearly fifteen centuries, has been divided into two opposing camps,—the one, and, in all the ages, by far the larger part, holding that the entrance into this higher unity is truly probational; the other that it is absolutely fixed and effected by God. In discussing this problem, the advocates of the necessitarian view have always had this advantage,—that the substitutionary theory of atonement in its very nature implied a fixed and determined number, whose sins were borne, in whose stead Christ suffered, and whose sins were cancelled by His sufferings. On the other hand, those who have maintained the probational view have the advantage — first, of the inner consciousness of responsibility which every man feels, and from which he cannot set himself free by any consideration of his moral conditions; and, secondly, of the entire tenor of Scripture, which certainly supports the idea that, under the Gospel, man is in a truly pro-

bational relation to God, and to eternal destiny. This question presents itself under another topic of theology, and must there be discussed. It is only necessary here to ask: Does the view of the valency of the Atonement, and of its relation to the race, and to the individual, which we have here presented, lay the foundation for a probational or for a necessitated personal salvation?

First, there can be no doubt that the merit of Christ's work calls for its reward. That reward is all the fulness of Divine love, grace and promise to His own. These are assured to His people by the justice as well as the love of the Father. To those who are in Christ Jesus the immutability of God assures "no condemnation." In Christ we have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge, to lay hold of the hope set before us in the Gospel. But while the relation between Christ's work and His reward is thus unalterably sure, it is a great mistake to suppose it capable of being weighed, measured, or numbered, or equated with the demerits or wants of any number of sinners. Christ would have His reward in the infinite love, faithfulness, and grace of the Father in the salvation of *one sinner*, and *nothing less than the merits of Christ could save that one sinner. Those same merits needed for the salvation of one sinner* are at the same moment, and by the very same virtue, *adequate to the salvation of all the countless myriads of the race.* It is this personal character of the work of Christ which makes it capable of *unlimited application.* "He is the

author of eternal salvation unto *all them* that obey Him" (Heb. v. 9). Every time that a sinner comes to God in His name He is still "able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 25). While, therefore, the merit of Christ's work is immutably certain in its efficacy, and unlimited in its application, that application is, by its very nature, capable of control by probational conditions—in fact, must be controlled by conditions of some kind. It is capable of unlimited application. It is applied only to those who are Christ's. In this all are agreed. The only question is, How do we become Christ's—by a determining decree of God or by probational faith? The work of Christ itself certainly does not by its nature determine it. The Scriptures everywhere proclaim its unlimited scope, and the possibility of its application to all. It is a personal merit of the Son who obeyed the Father's loving command even unto death, yea the death of the cross. It has given Him mediatorial power. That power is needed in all its fulness by every sinner. It is, therefore, capable of laying the foundation of just such gracious probation as our ethical theology requires, and as we believe the Scripture teaches.

Again, this work of Christ in its nature exerts the moral power by which we may be lifted into the new and holy life.

First, it asserts the guilt of sin. The law which condemns it to penalty cannot be broken.

Christ Himself died to obey that law. He suffered the penalty laid upon the race.

Second, it sets forth the unspeakable value of holiness and of obedience to God. The infinite saving efficacy of Christ's work lies in the value of obedience. The glory of His mediatorial kingdom is founded on the worth of His righteousness and obedience.

Third, it has in it all the drawing power of love. "He loved us and gave Himself for us." "We love Him because He first loved us."

Fourth, it is the example to man, and to the universe of moral beings, of Divine righteousness in all its fundamental elements—

1. As right.
2. As law.
3. As obedience.
4. As self-sacrifice.
5. As love.

Lastly, by the power of its moral value as a work of right, of law, of obedience, of self-sacrifice, of love, it gives infinite strength to that moral power in which the government of God stands eternally secure. It is not an expedient, not a makeshift to terrify, or a public dramatic object lesson, but it is the highest perfection of moral good that the universe has seen or can see, wrought out to the honour and glory of the Father by His well-beloved Son, a work which angels desire to look into, and beholding enter more perfectly themselves into the moral mind of God.

The Atonement then originates with the love of the Father to a world of sinners sending His only begotten Son. It is wrought by the love of the Son who enters into the will of the Father with loving obedience. To render that obedience, He enters into that law of our moral constitution which renders salvation possible and becomes man. As man He bows to all the penalty which Divine law had laid upon the race. He does this that He may win from among men some who will believe on His name, *i.e.* find the lost sheep. In doing this He merits from the Father an infinite reward, the benefits of which accrue to the race with which He made Himself one — first to all the race in bringing all within reach of God's mercy and a new and gracious probation, and then to all who receive Him and become His own in "giving them power to become the sons of God."

Thus, that which atones for sin is the offering to God of an infinite righteousness, in which the bearing of penalty is indeed the culmination of self-sacrifice, but in which the efficacy lies in the merit of its love, and from which there springs an inexhaustible fountain of grace and salvation.

The Resurrection in the Revelation of Redemption.

We may append to the New Testament idea of the atoning work of Christ a brief consideration of the Resurrection as related to human

redemption. Its importance in this respect is evident from the prominence given to it in the Apostolic preaching. It is even associated with the death of Christ as a foundation fact of the Christian faith in such passages as Rom. iv. 25, and Paul's summary of Christian faith, 1 Cor. xv. 3.

In the Apostolic preaching it receives great emphasis.

1. As the crowning evidence of our Lord's divinity. He was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.

2. As the Divine seal of acceptance of the work of Christ and of His mediatorial authority. Christ's resurrection from the dead is the world's "assurance" of the final consummation of that work in the general judgment.

3. As the first-fruits, and so evidence of that final triumph over death in which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth to life again.

On this account our Lord announces it as the test and seal of His Divine mission and confirms this after the resurrection itself. Compare John ii. 19-21, and Matt. xii. 40, with xxiv. 46.

CHAPTER VI

THE MEDIATORIAL OFFICE

THE resurrection of our Lord after His atoning death leads up to that permanent position of authority and grace which He occupies in God's economy of Redemption. In our older theology this was set forth under the offices of prophet, priest, and king. He is the source of all light of truth and power of salvation to the world. He is our high priest through whose sacrifice and continued intercession alone we may draw near to God, and find acceptance in His sight. And He is the King upon the throne of the universe, directing all things for the establishment of God's Kingdom upon the earth and in the universe. These offices together constituted His mediatorial work. This presentation has many advantages. It presents the work of Christ under the new dispensation as the culmination of the Old Covenant. There the prophets unfolded and proclaimed to men the will of God, a work completed in all its fulness of grace and truth by Christ. There the high priests offered the atoning sacrifices by which the people drew near to God, a work the whole significance of which is derived from His offering of Himself.

The chosen people were guided and governed in their national life by their king, who was the Lord's anointed, and was even spoken of in His official capacity as the Son of God. But the true kingdom is that of Jesus Christ in which He is the head of the Church, and governs the whole world and the universe of God in a Mediatorial Providence which concentrates all its moral forces in the work of redeeming sinners and restoring them to the favour and image of God; and which will be consummated in the final judgment and the eternal kingdom wherein shall dwell only the holy and the blessed. The foundation of this conception is laid in the entire preparation made for the coming of Christ in the Old Testament. The religious elements which entered into that preparation were furnished by the prophets, the priest and the king. At first the Messianic hope centres around the king, and He is pre-eminently the type of the coming One. Deuteronomy and Jeremiah add to this the conception of a great coming prophet, and Ezekiel and the second Isaiah, the conception of a new atonement in a new temple and made by the elect servant of Jehovah. The ideas of the work of Christ as the Saviour of men thus presented were peculiarly adapted to the Jewish people, and readily enabled them to grasp and receive, without prejudice, the essential faith of Christianity. Christ became thus to them all that their ancient faith required or hoped for. The Messianic idea our Lord Himself developed in the parables, but dwelt

much more largely upon the Kingdom as the Kingdom of God and of heaven, than upon the King or the Kingship, though before Pilate He owned Himself a King whose kingdom was not of this world, and whose only weapon was the truth; and to His disciples He at times held out the coming of the Son of Man in His Kingdom with power and great glory. The institution of the Lord's Supper, the paschal discourses and the intercessory prayer also turn our thoughts to the exercise of a priestly office. But here at the same time the mediatorial office, as including all these types and shadows, and as far greater and more comprehensive than all these begins distinctly to appear. Here He presents Himself as the revealer of the Father; as "the way, the truth, and the life," through whom we "come to the Father." He teaches His disciples to "ask in His name"; and He says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Again He says: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter that He may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth." "And when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me; and ye also bear witness because ye have been with Me from the beginning."

"It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send Him unto

you." "In that day ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father Himself loveth you." In these words He lays the foundation in the minds of His disciples of full faith in His mediatorial work, including His abiding presence, and revealing and comforting work in their hearts through His Spirit, the availing power of His name in prayer, and His continuous work of intercession on their behalf. When we add to this the teaching of the parables of the Kingdom, and the words with which the final commission is introduced, "All power hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth," it will be seen how thoroughly our Lord Himself laid the foundation for this faith in His abiding mediatorial office and work.

In the Jewish branches of the Christian Church this faith received its full expansion under the analogy of the Old Testament institutions. This expansion we have in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The Apocalypse also indirectly presents many elements of the same faith under the same symbolic form; in fact the two books probably present us with the same phase of development of this doctrine. We can find the beginning of this development in the very first Apostolic preaching. In Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost the gift of the Holy Ghost then first received is at once recognised by him as the mediatorial work of the risen and ascended Lord. He receives this of the Father, He bestows it upon

His disciples. This, his first work, is the proof that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, *i.e.* hath placed Him in the position of permanent authority and grace at the head of the Messianic Kingdom. In his next discourse faith in the name of the risen Prince of Life is the source of healing power, future "seasons of refreshing" are to come from His presence, and He abides in the heavens (the seat of Divine power) "till the times of the restoration of all things," and His present mission as the Servant of God is to bless every one by turning them away from their iniquities. In a following discourse he speaks again of Him as the one whom "God did exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins." It is not difficult to appreciate the subsequent expansion of this spiritual Messianic faith into the full expression contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews from the side of atonement and forgiveness of sins, or into that of the Apocalypse from the side of the world-wide Messianic Kingdom.

But to the Gentiles the whole work and office of Christ for the world's salvation is developed from a different analogy, though with equal, if not even greater fulness by St Paul. Paul's complete presentation of this mediatorial work we have in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, though many collateral elements may be gathered from other parts of his writings, especially from his description of the consumma-

tion in the fifteenth of first Corinthians. Here the incarnation, the atoning work, the mediatorial office, the progressive kingdom, and the final consummation are all combined in one "eternal purpose," or, as we might translate it, "purpose of the ages." This purpose, "hid from all ages in God," is a revelation to the highest intelligences of the universe of the manifold wisdom of God. It includes the original creation of all things by Jesus Christ, the summing up of all things in heaven and earth in Christ, the exaltation of Christ "far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come, the headship of Christ to His Church, supplying her with all fulness of blessing, the final consummation of the Kingdom of God, the resurrection of the dead, the judgment, and an eternal state in which God shall be all in all. The application of this grand ideal to all the history of the Church, and of the individual Christian, fills out Paul's preaching and writing, and evidently inspires his whole life. It is the unsearchable riches of Christ given to one who feels and calls himself less than the least of all saints to preach among the Gentiles. In it in all things Christ has "the pre-eminence." It presents the grandest ideal of the world's moral history ever received by the mind of man. It is interesting to see how this glory of Christ in the revelation given to Paul for the Gentile Church is paralleled by the similar revelation given to the Jewish Church in the

Epistle to the Hebrews. There Christ is superior, not only to Moses and Joshua and the Aaronic priesthood, but to angels and all other ministers of God, being the Son by whom He made the worlds of time. In the spiritual life of the Church, to the living faith of the Church, the risen Christ was revealed like the morning sun in the heavens reaching mid-day splendour to the vision of both branches of the Apostolic Church before the first generation was ended. The mediatorial office of Christ as thus unfolded in the New Testament has its foundation in the following facts :

1. The Incarnation.
2. The human life of temptation and suffering making Him perfect through suffering for this office.
3. The atoning death.
4. The Resurrection and Ascension.

Lastly, the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was the evidential fact which revealed Christ as fully entered upon His office and endued with its authority and power. Each successive triumph of the Gospel confirmed this evidence and not only gave full assurance to this Apostolic faith in the authority and power of their Master, but also expanded their apprehension of its grandeur and glory. This mediatorial idea has thus become a most important element of religious faith. It enters into the very essence of Christianity as a religion, especially in the following particulars :

1. It makes the Atonement not an abstract idea, or a long past fact, remembered in the world's history, but the living merit of the living Saviour, binding our faith to the personal living Almighty Saviour and not to a remembered past fact. The importance of this to a true religious faith we shall understand presently.

2. It lays the foundation not only for the confidence of personal faith in a personal Saviour, but also for personal responsibility to Him as our Divine Master. Nothing is more prominent in the New Testament than the deep religious sense of this relationship. It is the glory and joy of the Apostolic Christians from Peter, Paul and John out to the humblest disciple, and forms the basis of all duty and service. The importance and prominence of the mediatorial idea in New Testament religion is also seen in the vast extension of it which has appeared in the religious faith of later times. As an idea peculiarly adapted to the spiritual infirmity of sinful humanity, it took hold on the human mind, and was expanded to a mediating church, a mediating human priesthood, mediating saints, the Virgin Mary, etc., forming a vast system which caused religious faith to rest short of God Himself, and hence to so far cease to be true religion ; and which set before the minds of men ideals less than the perfect God and perfect man. For any of these extensions the New Testament furnishes no authority. The "one Mediator" between God and men is "Christ Jesus, Man."

CHAPTER VII

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN REDEMPTION

THE first-fruits of our Lord's mediatorial office appear in that gift of the Holy Ghost by which Christianity as a religion was inaugurated on the day of Pentecost. The spirit then given was recognised by Peter as the promise of the Father and the gift of the risen and ascended Lord (Acts ii. 33). This was the fulfilment of His own first reference to His mediatorial work in the paschal discourses, "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter that He may be with you for ever." The office and work of the Spirit thus follows in natural order after the mediatorial work of Christ.

To the Old Testament Church the Holy Spirit was already a familiar presence as we have seen in our study of the doctrine of the Trinity. We there find the Holy Spirit as the source of all efficiency in nature and the agent of God's work in Creation; as the source of intelligence, genius and ability in man, and more especially as the power from which comes moral discernment, noble impulses and religious illumination. From these it is an easy step to the supernatural prophetic spirit which included but passed beyond them

all. In this Old Testament teaching the Holy Spirit unites the material and the spiritual, the natural and the supernatural, the things past and the things to come. To religious faith they are all alike, the work of the Spirit of God who worketh all and in all. So to the Apostles the Spirit who inspired the ancient prophets was the Spirit of Christ, revealing His coming and work. It is quite in the line of this Old Testament teaching when we are told that the human body of Christ was prepared by the Holy Spirit apart from the common process of nature; and that when entering upon His ministry, His human spirit was endowed for the Messianic office and work by the descent upon Him of the Holy Ghost.

This Old Testament teaching prepared the minds of the disciples of Christ to appreciate His teaching, when He outlined to them in His parting discourses and final commission the pre-eminence of the Holy Spirit in the new dispensation. The new dispensation was to be not merely a new set of outward institutions for the maintenance or extension of religion amongst men; nor was it to be a set of new facts serving to reveal God more fully, and so to act as motives to a more perfect religious life; nor yet was it to be a new and more complete system of religious doctrines, or an enlarged religious faith embracing a wider circle of religious truth. All these we have already found it to be. But beyond all these, deeper than all these, creating all these,

it was to be a more universal and more powerful manifestation of that Spirit of God whose presence and work are the secret of all efficiency both in the natural and in the spiritual world. Its analogy might thus be found in one of those great transitions in the geological history of our planet in which we find it by the creative agency of the same spirit passing from a lower to a higher plane of life. It was the gift to men, accompanying the more perfect revelation of God, of the power within themselves of a higher moral and religious life. It is a new more abundant and universal manifestation of the Creator Spirit from whom all life and created being come.

We have already referred to our Lord's promise of this gift of the Holy Spirit, both before and after His resurrection, and as recorded in several passages by both Luke and John. It is not said expressly that these promises were the direct cause of the action of the disciples which followed, but the connection of thought in the record suggests that conclusion. After our Lord's ascension the eleven, with other disciples, making a company of about one hundred and twenty, continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. They evidently had their commission in mind, for they made provision for its fulfilment by the election of Matthias. At the end of ten days, being the Hebrew Pentecost, or festival of first-fruits, they were assembled in the usual manner, when "suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the

house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The first part of this account describes a purely physical phenomenon, sensible to the eye and ear. But this is only the prelude to a form of expression which turns our thoughts at once to spiritual things. The words, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit," are common in both the Old Testament and the New, and always to express moral and religious—*i.e.* spiritual—light, or energy, or life, such as we shall examine more fully hereafter. The expression, "they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance," is a new form of expression soon to become familiar in the Christian Church, so as to form almost a part of the ordinary religious exercises in the Apostolic age. But though so familiar then, in our day we can scarcely decide with certainty as to its exact import, we know that it was one of many gifts of the Spirit, and that it represented some form of endowment connected with the utterance of religious thought and emotion, through spoken language, conveying these thoughts to men from many lands, so that they exclaimed in astonishment, "We do hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God." Then followed the sermon of Peter to the assembled multitude, with this result: "They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and

the rest of the Apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' Immediately Peter addresses to them the great fundamentals of Christianity in these words: 'Repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him.' They then that received His word were baptized: and there were added to them in that day about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Now, laying aside for the present the physical phenomena and the gift of tongues, to which we may return again, let us look carefully at what of a more purely spiritual character took place on this occasion.

This is set forth in three statements of fact:—

1. We have the general expression, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit." Following the Old Testament usage of these words, they can only mean an extraordinary natural or supernatural endowment of these men with gifts of spiritual intelligence or power not before possessed.

2. They "spake the mighty works of God" as "the Spirit gave them utterance." This centers the more general idea in religious understanding, and in gifts of speech or utterance of the new thoughts thus received.

3. Peter's sermon and its wonderful results in the conversion of the three thousand, together with the remarkable grace of these new converts, indicating their completely changed character, give us a still more definite knowledge of the new ideas which were imparted in this illumination, and of their moral power in renewing the hearts and lives of men. They included the very fundamentals of Christianity as a religious faith, repentance, remission of sins, faith in Jesus Christ, and this gift of the Holy Spirit. These made a man a Christian, or, as he was then called, a disciple, and they centered around the outward ordinance of baptism.

The illustration of the work of the Holy Spirit given at this beginning of the Christian dispensation is very largely extended as we follow the history of the Apostolic Church throughout the book of Acts. Some one has indeed proposed to call the book the gospel of the Holy Ghost. What is there on the day of Pentecost exhibited as a new understanding of religious truth, with power to preach it, and power both of moral conviction of sin and of regeneration and sanctification of the sinful nature of man, and of influence by which this new individual spiritual life by the ordinance of baptism at once assumes organic form as a living community of God's people, is rapidly extended to tens of thousands of people. Jerusalem is filled with the doctrine. A great company of the priests become obedient to the faith. The towns of Judea and Samaria and

Galilee to Damascus and Antioch are evangelised. Difficult questions of polity and doctrine are settled. A broader and more Christ-like view of God's grace is given to the world and under its light and liberty the Gentiles enter the Church of Christ. Roman Asia, Greece and Rome itself are reached. In all this the directing presence of the Holy Spirit is everywhere manifest, guiding the corporate Church, guiding its individual leaders, creating its new thought and its new form of expression and record of that thought, but all from the fundamental basis of a moral and religious quickening into new life and power of the individual souls of men. It is not a magical or arbitrary force or power from without, but a spiritual lifting from within. Fixing our attention upon the moral and religious phenomena as facts in the religious history of mankind, and we have abundant repetition and illustration of these facts in our own day, we can for the moment lay out of sight all the supernatural accompaniments as in the study of the Ulster revivals of the early sixties, we can lay aside the unusual physical phenomena which accompanied the acknowledged work of moral and religious power which there took place. But these facts need not be avoided as if we feared to face them as facts. In the modern case, however mysterious, they were too well known at the time and too well attested to be denied. Perhaps in our study of ancient history we may learn a lesson from this. But whether ancient or modern, however brought

about physically, whether by natural law or supernatural agency, they have their moral purpose and effect. In the first place simply as physical facts they are to religious faith a demonstration of the power and presence of God. Before them men are almost by a moral compulsion convicted of the presence of God and of their sinfulness before Him. So they acted in the Apostolic age. The gift of tongues, healing, interpretation of tongues and other supernatural phenomena which accompanied the Apostolic preaching were for a sign to the unbelieving; but the higher gift was prophesying, *i.e.* the understanding and utterance of God's truth; this was after all the fundamental work of the Spirit, the leading of men to the knowledge of the truth, and the awakening in their hearts of strong conviction of truth.

We are to seek then the office and work of the Holy Spirit, not so much in the occasional examples of supernatural power which accompanied the Apostolic preaching and work, as in that great movement of enlarged understanding of truth, of stronger moral convictions, of deeper, larger, and more fully assured faith, which beginning at Pentecost laid the foundations of the Christian Church. The main features of that movement may be summed up in the following particulars:—

1. In a complete though gradual unfolding to the Church of the new truth of Christianity. This was Christ's own promise, "He shall teach you

all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you," "He shall bear witness of me," and "He shall guide you into all the truth." Of this promise Paul records the fulfilment when he writes to the Corinthians of the excellency of Gospel truth:

"Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man: whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him; but unto us God revealed them by His spirit"; and again, "The mystery of Christ which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men as it has now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." As this unfolding was gradual, so it was historical, following the course of a natural development, keeping pace with the needs of the growing Church, until in the close of the first generation it reached its completeness.

2. In endowing with spiritual power for their work the preachers of the Gospel. This also was the promise of Christ, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The fulfilment is equally distinct. After such a baptism it is written, "And with great power gave the Apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all." So Paul also attests to the Thessalonians: "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and

in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance"; and still more generally to the Romans, "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

3. In awakening conviction in the hearts of those to whom the Gospel is preached. This again was the promise of Christ: "And He when He is come will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment," a promise fulfilled under the very first sermon, where, as we have seen, thousands were "pricked in their hearts," and led to cry, "Brethren, what shall we do." No part of the office and work of the Spirit is more conspicuous in the history of the Church than this. It lies at the very foundation of the work of the world's redemption from sin. From the prehistoric memories of redemption down to the fulness of the Christian dispensation conviction of sin has been an important element of saving religion. In the Christian Church it is the very centre and secret of its saving power. The Gospel triumphs only as men are deeply convicted of their sin.

4. In working a moral renewal in the hearts of those who hear and believe the Gospel. This was in the Apostolic age a very marked experience and was known as the gift of the Holy Spirit. It sometimes accompanied specific ordinances, as baptism, or the laying on of the hands of the Apostles; in other cases it preceded these as in the case of Cornelius and his friends. But however conditioned, it is in the Apostolic history a

clearly marked feature of the Christian life, so distinctly and outwardly manifest as to be evident to all men. It may be questioned whether it ever in the Apostolic age appears as a mysterious and hidden accompaniment to be assumed as following an outward ordinance. In the Apostolic age at least it was known and read of all men by its fruits, and was known and acknowledged as the work of the Holy Ghost.

5. In an abiding, enlightening, sanctifying, and comforting presence in the heart of every individual child of God. This again was the promise of Christ. What He was to His disciples as they daily walked and talked with their Master and learned from Him the things of God, the other Comforter, who was not to sojourn for a season but to abide with them forever, was always to be. The dulness of their understanding, the sorrow of their hearts, all their anxious troubles were to be provided for by Him. Our Lord indeed ascribes sanctifying power to the truth, but the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and thus the Sanctifier as well as the Comforter, in the words of Paul the Helper of our infirmities.

6. Finally, as in the individual Christian and the ministry of the Church so in the corporate Church herself, the Holy Spirit is an abiding presence. It is, in fact, this presence which constitutes the living Church. As the body is sustained and nourished and grows through the indwelling soul, so is the Church an habitation of God and of Christ through the Spirit. If the

Church have lost the indwelling presence of the Spirit, she may have a name to live but is dead and ready to be spewed out of Christ's mouth. But the indwelling Spirit guides her in her work, as in the first mission of Paul and Barnabas from Antioch and in the freedom of the Gentiles from the bondage of Jewish ordinances; and gives power and efficacy to all her instituted ordinances, so making her indeed the Church of the living God who dwelleth in her by His Spirit.

This presence and power of the Holy Spirit is the characteristic of the Christian dispensation, predicted by the Old Testament prophets, and without it the Mediatorial Kingdom and the redemption from sin must fail. It alone can build upon the foundation of the atonement, applying the truth to the salvation of men, and representing the Lord Himself in the governance of His Kingdom.

CHAPTER VIII

UNIVERSAL GRACE

WE have already under the doctrine of the Atonement referred to its provisions of universal grace as the foundation of a gracious probation to individual men, thus leading us up to personal salvation. This grace is set forth by St Paul in two classical passages, in one of which the glory, efficacy, and universality of grace are magnified; and in the other, contrasted with the power of sin, as reaching all men through the laws of heredity and moral solidarity. These passages are Titus ii. 12, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared for all men"; and Rom. v. 18, "So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men unto condemnation, even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men unto justification of life." The universal benefit which thus accrues to the race through the Atonement, the mediatorial work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit may be conveniently considered as a supplement to the Divine provisions of redemption in the gift and work of Christ and of the Spirit. They are the direct outcome of Redemption, and prepare the way for its application for the salvation of individual men.

Paul calls this universal benefit of redemption "the free gift" and "grace," or more fully "the grace of God that bringeth salvation." The word grace has a twofold significance, first, the disposition which bestows kindness on those who have no claim to it, and again, the kindness itself so bestowed. In the second passage "the gift" or "the free gift" is used for the second meaning above, and grace is confined to the first, and is not the result but the moving cause of the Atonement itself. It is of the second meaning of grace that we must now enquire.

The universal and unconditional benefit of the work of Christ and of the Spirit to the race we shall call universal grace or the free gift for all. Even this universal grace must be regarded as unconditioned only as granted at the foundation of each individual probation. It, too, has its conditions in the common probation of races, peoples, and families of men. It is only unconditional as the basis of each individual probation granted freely by God according to His sovereign mercy.

From the passages before us it is evident that this grace is effective towards salvation, as sin was effective towards condemnation. It is not said that it saves, but it "bringeth salvation"; and it is not said that it justifies, but it is unto justification of life. It brings salvation by teaching, and is something which is manifest, *i.e.* known, and has made its appearance for all men, something of which men are clearly cog-

nisant. It is thus not some secret mysterious unconscious working, but something consciously known and capable of recognition in the world.

We have thus set before us as the first result of the Atonement a distinct moral power in the world, universal in its influence, and working towards the salvation of men. As to the nature of this power three opinions have been held, which seem inconsistent with these teachings of the New Testament:

1. The older Calvinism reduced it to mere temporal beneficence, or to a work of the Spirit ineffectual for salvation. Our texts make no reference to temporal benefits, but solely to that which is spiritual and unto salvation, and give no ground for any supposition that it is insufficient for its purpose.

2. Some Arminians make it equivalent to a universal regeneration and justification of all infants, thus rendering original sin or depravity largely, if not entirely, hypothetical. They would have existed had not the Atonement intervened; but now they are abolished, or exist only as the sin which remains after regeneration. The objection to this theory is its lack of scriptural foundation—the fact that it is built purely on a logical basis, and is not a matter of religious faith, and that it is inconsistent with the teaching of Scripture, supported as it is by the moral consciousness of the race, on the subject of human sinfulness, and the universal need of regeneration. "Ye must be born again." We cannot conceive of Christ

using such words as these if all men were already regenerate through the common universal provisions of Divine grace. Everywhere regeneration and all other blessings of the Christian salvation are set forth as a universal need, and as conditioned on repentance and faith. To this the moral consciousness of the race fully responds.

3. Universalists generally interpret it as absolutely securing the salvation of all men by a process or act of unconditioned grace. This stands opposed to the entire teaching of the New Testament on human responsibility and probation.

Our definition of universal grace must harmonise—

(*a*) With the Scripture teaching that it is universal; the Apostles' "all men" must not be minified. Christ is the Light "which lighteth every man coming into the world."

(*b*) With the Scripture implication, if not direct assertion, that it is sufficient for salvation. The scriptural faith that each man's condemnation is of himself and not of his conditions or moral environment clearly implies this. The texts which we have quoted we think directly assert it, as does also the common sense of moral responsibility before God.

(*c*) With man's individual fallen condition and conscious need of personal salvation. This is so evidently the teaching of Scripture, and is so fully attested by universal experience, that we need not dwell on it here. It will be more fully defined presently.

(*d*) With the probational conditions of personal salvation, as set forth in the Gospel.

These limitations of related truth will exclude false conceptions in various directions such as have often perverted this truth into dangerous error, or have obscured its moral influence in religion. Turning to the New Testament faith for the positive conception of this truth, we find it set forth—

1. As opposed at every point to the influence of sin on the race, and through the race on the individual. This is set forth by Paul in the passage already quoted from the fifth of Romans.

2. As such it dispels the moral darkness which sin has brought to the race by new light of moral and religious truth. Thus Christ is "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This light brings universal moral responsibility, for, "This is the judgment that the light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil." So Christ announces Himself as "the light of the world"; and Paul recognises this light even in the heathen world, in the first and second of Romans.

3. It awakens the dead moral natures of men by the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, making their consciences sensitive to the power of the truth. Even the Old Testament, in Gen. vi. 3, and Job xxii. 8, recognises moral discernment as the work of God's Spirit, and predicts that this Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh (Joel ii. 28); while in the New Testament our Lord

promises that when this Spirit is come, "He will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment."

4. The extent of this light and power of the Spirit is such as places men once more in a position of moral responsibility, such that St Paul says they are without excuse.

Even fallen men thus stand under the provisions of redemption in a position of probational responsibility, salvation becomes possible to all, and each man's salvation depends upon his use of the new gracious probation. What the terms and conditions of the new probation are we shall consider presently. In the meantime a single collateral question arises, What becomes of those who die before they arrive at years of accountability if the race is not universally justified and regenerated in virtue of the unconditional benefits of the Atonement? A complete answer cannot be given to this question from direct Scripture statement, because Scripture confines its teaching to the necessities of men on probation. If aught required to be done for the salvation of those dying in infancy either by themselves or by their sponsors, it would doubtless be so clearly stated. Whatever may be God's method of dealing with them it lies beyond the sphere of our moral agency, and hence concerning it Scripture is silent. Some points, however, are made clear indirectly:

1. They are within the circle of God's love to the race. "God so loved the world."

2. Christ saw in them all the possibilities of the Kingdom of God. Hence He says, "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven," and speaks of them as "these little ones which believe on Me." And again, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." That is, it belongs by promise to them.

3. He declares that it is not the will of God that one of them should perish (Matt. xviii. 14). Compare on this point 1 Kings xiv. 13.

4. Hence while the method in which God deals with them is not directly revealed, and while the lack of probation places an essential difference between them and those who pass through the conditions of salvation in this life, we may rest in the fullest assurance that God has provided for them, and that in His infinite love and mercy they are safe.

DIVISION VI.—PERSONAL SALVATION

CHAPTER I

THE NEW PROBATION

HAVING thus completed our study of the general provisions of redemption as they prepare the way for the salvation of man from sin, we turn now to the administration of this redemption in the several processes of salvation. At this point a wide division appears in the practical faith of the Christian Church, and one which at least on the surface appears to be of serious importance. On the one side emphasis is laid upon the Church as the divinely ordered embodiment of the provisions of redemption among men, and the sole agency for the extension of its saving benefits to individual men, and that by means of a very rigidly defined external order of institutions. From this standpoint our next study should be that of the Church and its ordinances as really an integral part of the provisions of redemption.

The other section emphasizes the Divine dealing with the individual soul, brings each individual man into direct relations of personal responsibility

to God, making the Church and its institutions a divinely ordered and important auxiliary to this. This is the standpoint as we take it of the Protestant Reformation and the standpoint in which we proceed with our study from the Divine provisions of redemption at once to the way of personal salvation. Even from what is called the Catholic point of view, the result to be attained is the same, the spiritual restoration of individual men to the favour and love of God in Christ; and here all men of living Christian faith, Catholic or Protestant, may again unite in that living fellowship of the Spirit which is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Individual to be saved

is, as we have seen, a sinner in his fallen nature as well as in his acts of sin. In this fall, sin has replaced faith and love to God by a mortal terror of Divine judgment; spiritual understanding has been darkened, conscience has become dull if not entirely dead, falsehood has taken the place of truth, and the flesh, man's lower nature, rules over the Spirit.

But this fallen being is under the Divine provisions of redemption. The light of truth is penetrating his blindness, and the quickening power of the Spirit is awakening his conscience, and his very dread of the just judgments of God are a sign that all power of spiritual life is not extinguished. He, though a sinner in his sins,

is by the redeeming grace of God under a new probation for salvation.

We have already defined probation as the process of moral life by which we make virtue or moral goodness our own, and we have seen what is implied in this probation. We have also considered probation as involved in the original moral history and development of the race ending in the universal fall of man into sin. We may now consider other possible forms of probation.

1. The form of probation already considered involved a nature morally good, in which moral intelligence and power of choice existed, and in which character, *i.e.* habit and disposition of motive forces was towards the right, but with antithetic elements still capable of perversion to evil, and with an external temptation or tempter. In his choice we have found that man fell from good into sin.

2. Another form of probation to which we have some reference in Scripture, seems to be of a different kind and with different results. So far as we can judge, this probation involved a nature good, and with perhaps a moral development more advanced than that of primitive man, but still with antithetic elements capable of perversion to sin, either with or without external temptation. In this nature again we have intimations that sin became a fact, though not as in the case of man a universal fact. Into the probation of some of the angels, temptation may

have entered, but at least with some there could have been no temptation and their sin must have been entirely their own doing.

Probation therefore does not imply moral indifference as Pelagius is said to have held. In fact, it may be doubtful whether a moral nature could exist in a state of absolute indifference to both good and evil. It rather seems that a being endowed with moral nature must by the very necessity of that nature be either good or bad, and as the original creature of God we can only think of him as good. But if a moral being with all the powers of his being set by his very nature towards the good may yet be placed on probation either with or without temptation from without, it seems no less possible that a moral being fallen into sin and with habits and dispositions inclined to sin may again be restored to probation. Probation means for him that once more through the grace of God, the good is brought within his reach.

The new probation is such a probation. It is a probation for sinners. It brings to them in their sinful and fallen condition such saving influences as once more place life and goodness and God within their reach.

As we have seen in the original probation of the race, all probation implies a test. The test of the first probation was the supremacy of conscience in the control of sense. This presented itself to the first humanity in some outward form as the law of God. "Thou shalt not eat of it."

Such a test in itself implied the strength of a nature naturally good, and its object was to convert the natural goodness bestowed by God into the moral goodness of immutable holy character lifting man into the moral as well as the natural image of his Maker. But the test of a new probation, by which man may be lifted out of his fall and immutably established in a new righteousness created within him must be something fitted to his moral infirmity. It can no longer be a doing or a not-doing, the exercise of the native powers of a pure moral nature controlling all lower motives. The new Christian probation is therefore fundamentally different from that of the first man or of the angels.

1. They were still in the original perfection of their moral nature; he is fallen in sin.

2. They stood by the exercise of that perfection in virtue; he must be saved out of his sins by grace.

3. They entered on their probation by the original constitution of their nature; he solely by the provisions of redeeming grace.

4. They, so far as we know, terminated probation by one act of sin; he must work out his salvation with fear and trembling as a worker together with God who worketh in him to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

And yet this new probation beginning in utter moral helplessness and rising by successive gifts of prevenient and growing grace, through the most

elementary stages of moral and religious life is regarded by St Paul as more excellent. The first terminated in sin, this in salvation, nay more, a reign of grace through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are now prepared to follow the inner process by which probation is realized in the spiritual life of each individual. The light of Divine truth and the power of the Holy Spirit reaching each man in his own measure in the gracious providence of God produce—

1. Conviction of sin. This which is purely a work of Divine grace not made conditional in its origin upon any moral act of the sinner, we find at the foundation of all probation, and of the entire process of individual salvation. Thus the work of John the Baptist preceded that of Christ. Thus Christ Himself began by preaching repentance. So in Paul's ministry, repentance toward God precedes faith. In Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost, the first result looking toward salvation was "They were pricked in their heart." So of Paul and the Philippian jailor, the first indication of their new life is this conviction.

The instrument of this conviction is the truth; but truth applied by the power of the Holy Spirit, making it in this way more than the natural power of the truth. By this influence of the Holy Spirit the human conscience is not only awakened to a sense of right and wrong, but it is brought into the immediate presence of God. Conviction is thus not a physical process,

nor yet a purely ethical or moral process. It is essentially religious. It is conviction not only of wrong as against moral law, but of sin as against God. It is indeed an awakening of conscience, but it is a placing of that conscience, nay more of the entire man in his religious sense as well as his moral nature before the bar of Divine judgment. So Paul presents it in the second chapter of Romans.

This conviction while wrought thus by the Spirit and the truth within comes from without ourselves. The convicted sinner is clearly conscious of this. Often he would gladly put away the troubling thoughts, but finds that he cannot; they follow him in spite of his resistance. It may indeed come to a man who is in the way of seeking the truth, but then it is a more advanced moral state, as we shall see presently, and represents a more advanced stage in the process of human probation. But the earliest conviction, that which first fully awakens a man to a sense of his sins, lays the foundation for the first great moral act, but does not necessitate it, and must not be confounded with it. To that we next turn.

Corresponding and answering to this work of grace from without, wrought upon all men who come into conditions of responsibility is the proper probational response from within the man. God's biddings are God's enablings; to God's voice we are called to hearken, and to listen is itself an act of—

2. Decision; it is the will yielding itself to the convictions of God's Spirit. When this act of yielding or decision is completed it becomes what is known in the New Testament as conversion, *i.e.* the turning of the whole man and the whole life from sin to God and His service. It is put before us in the New Testament in a variety of forms, sometimes the turning about of those who have been living in open sin, sometimes the coming of the weary and heavy laden to the meek and lowly One for rest, sometimes the cry of the earnest awakened heart, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Sometimes the cry of awakened alarm, "What must I do to be saved?" Sometimes it is receiving Christ or His truth, at other times it is obeying the truth, or the Gospel. But whatever may be the form of its expression or the variety of conflicting emotions which may accompany it, it is essentially the first response of the human heart to God's grace, a response not in itself saving, or completing probation, but looking and leading thereto.

Conviction and conversion as the first step toward salvation are expanded into contrition, confession and consecration. Contrition is conviction perfected after the act of decision, and opening up to us the true moral state of our heart and past life in its relation to God. It corresponds in religious emotion to conviction in the conscience. Confession is also a religious act, it is contrition taking practical form, or expressing itself in the acknowledgment of our

sins before God. Consecration is the abjuring of all sin and the yielding of our whole heart and life to the Divine service.

These elements of conviction, conversion, contrition, confession, and consecration, taken together, constitute

Repentance.

Repentance includes the Divine side of all prevenient grace, and the human side of all response to that grace either in emotion, intention, or action. It is thus something granted of God, and yet commanded to man. The Greek word signifies a change of mind—*i.e.* view, intention, and direction of one's outer and inner life. In this broad sense, as covering the whole ground of prevenient grace and man's response thereto both moral and religious, repentance and faith are presented as a summary of the gospel way of salvation. So Paul toward the close of his ministry sums up his gospel testimony as "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." But this very relation and association implies not so much a contrast or antithesis as a deeper spiritual unity in which they are inseparable the one from the other. Repentance already includes a germinant faith, and faith can only spring out of a penitent heart, and carries repentance forward to perfection. Hence true repentance is even already saving. God's grant of repentance is "unto life"; "godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation." It thus becomes the primary and universal proba-

tionary condition of salvation. Wherever man is found, there at least repentance is necessary unto salvation, a condition the lack of which condemned Tyre and Sidon and Sodom, but which saved Nineveh; which now is commanded to all men, and concerning which we have the assurance that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him.

Repentance as thus presented in the New Testament is the gift of God through Christ by the work of the Holy Spirit. For this God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless us, in turning every one of us away from our iniquities. It is thus a universal provision for men, granted to Israel as well as remission of sins by the exalted Prince and Saviour, but also granted to the Gentiles as a gift to which the goodness of God would lead even the worst of sinners who in his blindness is despising it, but which may become a terrible "peradventure" to those who oppose "the knowledge of the truth."

But while thus from the one side presented as the gift of God, from the other it is commanded as the duty of man. It is unnecessary to multiply scriptural illustrations of this, as they may be found everywhere in the Word of God. John and Christ Himself, Peter and Paul, the sermon on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, and that delivered from Mars Hill at Athens, all unite in commanding all men everywhere to repent.

Finally, it is perfected by its fruits. These are the proof of its reality. No violence of emotion

or turbulent physical or mental indications of earnestness and sincerity can supersede this. Lydia, whose heart was quietly opened to the Gospel, and whose house was opened to His dishonoured and suffering servants, was as much accepted and honoured of God as the jailer who "roared by reason of the disquietude of his soul." This supreme test of repentance grows out of its progressive character. It is not the work of a day. A Paul indeed in three days passed on to a higher stage, but it was after years of the experience described in the seventh of Romans. It often moves slowly from step to step of the light of the Spirit and the learning of the truth before it culminates in the full salvation provided in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is to be noted that in this entire study of the probation of prevenient grace the work of the Holy Spirit and the truth precedes. Our salvation is thus of God. The assent of the will is but man's submission to God. This is the true monergism which makes the work of the Holy Spirit both first and indispensable. It is at the same time the true synergism, demanding the full probational yielding of our will. Grace is always first, but will must work with grace. But it is not mere natural will, but will graciously enabled by the very grace with which it co-operates. But at the same time it is not constrained will, but free will, and hence probational because capable of resisting the Spirit. Hence the just condemnation, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have

life," the awful possibility of "quenching the Spirit," and "resisting the Holy Ghost." Even to "grieve" him is grievous sin.

But while repentance thus constitutes a true and universal probation, it is only preliminary, germinal, and leading to Christ. Preliminary in its negative aspect of turning from sin; germinal as its faith is only incipient and latent, implied rather than consciously exercised, leading to Christ, as Christ is the end of this faith and alone can perfect the receptive disposition which it evinces. But this probation is still imperfect, and is itself tested by the clearer light of the Gospel which is the final judge of all men. Hence Christ alone is the final judge of the world, as faith in Him is the true central and crucial point of the Christian probation.

Compare the case of Cornelius, Acts x. 4-5, 35-43.

Excursus on the Psychology of Moral Action.

Two erroneous theories:

1. That an outward occasion of action being present one or more motive desires arise. That action arises out of these desires as effect from cause or motion from force—the act being the mean resultant of the desire.

2. That an outward occasion for action being present, desires moving to action arise. That will acts as umpire among these deciding not of necessity to the stronger desire or to the mean result, but by independent self-action.

The first theory does not acknowledge the duality, the antithesis, the ultimate choice in action of which every man is conscious in himself and on which he bases his sense of responsibility.

The second theory supposes will to act without cause, or as we say in moral things, without reason, and hence contradicts the universal law of sufficient cause.

The first theory by placing all human action under the category of necessitated effect would destroy all moral character. And it asserts a truth that every act of will has its reason.

The second theory seems to deny reason or rational character to moral action, and yet it asserts a truth that moral action cannot be necessitated, and that in ourselves lies the whole blame or praise that it was not other, and that we were able to make it other, not only physically but morally so able.

Certainly the truth contained in each of these theories must be recognised and the error avoided. First of all let us look at an act performed under the impulse of a single motive, good, bad, or indifferent. It is seen at once that it has no conscious moral character. It is instinctive. It is done without consideration. If good we admire the natural goodness, but do not recognise in it the strength of virtue. If bad we may abhor the devilishness, but blame the man for the abnegation of his reason and conscience. He did not think, but he should have thought. For the development of true moral action, reflection, con-

sideration, that is, a balancing of motives is necessary. Let us then look at an act where two opposing motives come into play giving opportunity for power of alternate choice. Two apples, a sweet and a sour, are offered, which shall I take. Sweet, because to me sweet is more attractive. Here was power of alternate choice, but not moral act. It is evident that simple power of alternate choice, no matter how full may be the consideration, does not in itself constitute responsibility or moral action. What then is moral action? Let us take a clear and simple case. A boy passing a fruit-stand desires the fruit, has the opportunity to take it, resists because it is not right. Here is indeed alternate choice perfectly free so far as outer circumstances go. Here are opposing motives set over against each other. To do or not to do, that is the question. But the antithesis is a special one. It is not simply one motive against another, but the moral motive power, the conscience, against a lower motive power, the physical appetite, and the moral act is the rule of the higher nature. Now this rule of the higher nature implies effort, assertion of the right that is within ourselves against things that reach us from without. In like manner reason may act as a basis of higher action as against passion, appetite, etc. Reason appeals to truth. Conscience to right or duty. We see thus that moral action is not some inexplicable outgoing of will to choose on this side or that, but it is simply the assertion of the higher self, that which discerns

truth and right in its dominion over the lower elements of our nature. Immoral action is the failure of that assertion. The moral will based on conscience and reason acting in view of truth and right is that which creates moral good. Probation is the condition in which this action of the moral will begins to work from the basis of natural goodness or that which we have received by constitution of nature. Probation therefore implies—

1. The possibility, *i.e.* the basis of doing right, *i.e.* conscience and reason, truth and right apprehended as a basis of action.

2. The possibility of doing wrong, *i.e.* the presence of some object appealing to some lower desire, opposing conscience and forming the basis of a contrary choice or act to which we may yield for lack of assertion of the higher nature. This lower desire is not necessarily in essence evil, but becomes evil in relation, as opposed to conscience or reason, *i.e.* to right and truth. Probation is that condition in which effort is necessary for the assertion of the higher nature.

3. There are limits to probation. (*a*) If the strength of moral nature is such as overrides all lower motives without effort so that right is done as if instinctively then probation is terminated by moral perfection. On the other hand, such a force of lower motives as virtually amounts to compulsion likewise terminates probation or renders it further impossible.

4. The probational test or act must be con-

sidered whether works or faith. There is an important distinction between these two as conditions of probation. We have seen that there are two distinct standpoints from which probation is possible. The one is that of will inclined to right in a state of innocence with an external occasion of testing appealing to some lower desire which forms the antithetic basis for choice. Here the doing right, the act of will standing firm in the choice of right is the condition of success in the termination of probation. The other is that of a will inclined to evil and under penalty, but with a merciful drawing from without awakening conscience and so forming the basis of alternate choice. Here it will be seen that the proper probational response is not the exercise of the depraved will, but its submission in an act of trust to the holy influence from without. In the one case the probational condition is the holy self asserting itself and maintaining itself against the evil from without. In the other it is the unholy self yielding, renouncing self and trusting to the holy influences from without. This act which is known in the Christian religion as faith is thus in the very nature of moral relations the proper and natural probational response to the right and good for a fallen creature. It is in fact the only response possible. To assert the depraved will would be to stand fast in sin, just as for the unfallen to assert his holy will is to stand fast in righteousness. But as to Adam in innocency it was still possible in his probational state to yield to sin, so to fallen

man it is possible under the probation of grace to yield to God. In each case the volitional act is a negative rather than a positive act. It is a weakening rather than an assertion of power, but in each case it has in it the probational element. It puts us on the side of right or wrong with our own consent or assent.

We are now prepared to consider the process of probation in which this element of assent or faith, this fiduciary act is fully perfected from its first potential germ.

CHAPTER II

FAITH AS THE TEST OF THE NEW PROBATION

As we have described Repentance as the first stage in the new Probation for salvation, we may consider Faith as the second stage. At the same time it is presented in the religious teaching of Christ and His Apostles as the essential condition of salvation; "By grace have ye been saved through faith." "He that believeth not is judged already because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." The Christian salvation is certainly conditioned on the act of faith which accepts Christ. But the Epistle to the Hebrews goes further and makes faith the germinal principle of all religious life in all ages and dispensations, and hence the universal condition of probation. As we have already found that faith is the germinal and saving element in repentance, and as we shall hereafter find that faith working by love is the foundation of all probational action in the higher Christian life, faith becomes thus under the redemptive system, the distinctive and universal probational test; first under all imperfect moral conditions, the faith of the penitent; under the Gospel, personal faith in Christ, in the developed

Christian life, carried into effect through loving service, manifested in all good works. This faith is thus a thing of living growth. In the Gospel is revealed a righteousness of God, "from faith unto faith," and, "We through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness." Without this progressive development in all holy life faith dies; hence James says, "Faith apart from works is dead." The faith thus set before us may be described as a spiritual attitude of the soul, a receptive state of mind, referred to by our Lord when He says, "Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." The implicit faith of the penitent prepares for the special act of justifying faith, which is impossible to the impenitent soul. And justifying faith, accepting Christ, lays the foundation of and passes up into the matured faith of the permanent Christian life.

Faith as a state of mind is the result the influence of the Word and Spirit of God. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." But faith, as a probational act, is the probational use of the grace thus given. The Philippian jailer felt the power both of the Word and the awakening Spirit when he cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" and he was brought to the test of a probational act when it was replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house"; and when baptism was placed before him as the outward and visible sign of this act of faith.

Such an act of faith may be implicit, as in the case of the man with the withered hand, who showed his faith by stretching forth his hand, or the woman of Syrophœnicia, whose answer revealed her wonderful faith. In the more advanced Christian life, there is a continuous repetition of these acts of faith, both implicit and direct. In fact the whole course of Christian probation is described as a living by faith, walking by faith, faith working by love, and faith overcoming the world.

But this general principle of faith has its distinctive representative acts in every dispensation of saving grace, and in fact in each individual life. Abel's faith was shown in his sacrifice, Noah's in his preparing the ark; Abraham's in leaving his country; Moses' in his choice of the afflicted lot of Israel. The Mosaic economy provided for the national expression of faith in the great festivals, and for the individual expression of faith, in the varied personal offerings. A similar provision appears in Christianity under the Sacraments. But to each individual Christian the probational test in his personal experience is that offered by Paul to the Philippian jailer, and is known in theology as

Justifying Faith.

This faith is a step from the broader and more general moral and religious faith of the penitent or of the seeker after God to a more specific religious faith in God and Christ. It is, further,

a specific act of faith, the object of which is the historic Christ, in His mediatorial office, and which seeks from Him the personal forgiveness of sin.

Justifying Faith.

1. The verb used in the New Testament expresses a moral and religious act, an act of reposing trust or confidence. Like all faith it is spoken of as faith in God. Thus immediately after his conversion the Philippian jailer is spoken of as having believed in God. But it is most frequently spoken of as believing in Christ, and in His name. No more exact expression of this can be cited than the language of Peter to Cornelius, "To Him bear all the prophets witness, that through His name every one that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins"; or thus by St Paul, "to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." In a single passage the attention is directed to the atoning work of Christ, as with Himself the object of faith, "whom God set forth a propitiation through faith by His blood." The predominant New Testament presentation of this faith is thus personal trust in a personal Saviour.

2. This act of trust is for the remission of sins. It is pre-eminently the act of the convicted sinner. Whether presented as an outward act, expressing in the ordinance of baptism the inward and spiritual act, or directly as faith required for salvation, it is by both Peter and Paul presented to the sinner as the direct way to relief from the conscious burden of sin. So in the first sermon Peter says,

"Repent ye and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins"; and in the sermon to Cornelius and his friends, though here he is dealing with men who have long been devout servants of God, he says, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name every one that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins." So again Paul's commission is given him that the Gentiles "may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Me." And his own outward act of faith is expressed, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name." Whether, therefore, faith is expressed by the outward symbolic ordinance of baptism, or as an inward mental act, its direct object is the forgiveness of sins. St Paul's enlargement of this in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians is well known.

3. It is an act by which we especially receive or accept Christ as our Lord and Saviour. This is expressed in the New Testament by almost every variety of expression. Thus St John combines receiving and believing, "To as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." As thus receiving Christ, Paul makes it the entrance upon a permanent relation to Him governing our whole lives: "As, therefore, ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and builded up in Him, and established in your faith, even as ye were taught,

abounding in thanksgiving." Again with Paul it is receiving the Gospel in which we are to "stand" and by which we are "saved."

4. It is an act of obedience and self-surrender. Hence it is called by Paul "obedience of faith" and "obeying the Gospel." It thus widens out to a more comprehensive idea, "Ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." Just before he has expressed the same act of faith as a self-dedication to this obedience: "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are to whom ye obey."

5. It is not a meritorious, but an instrumental act. This Paul asserts when he says, "By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no man should glory. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God hath afore prepared that we should walk in them." And again, "Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law, of works? Nay, but by a law of faith." We have already seen how faith becomes the appropriate probational test for one who is morally helpless, and to whom salvation must come through grace. Such test is truly moral as well as religious in its character, as we shall see presently. But an act may be probational, and even morally right, and yet not meritorious

in the sense of desert of positive reward. There is that which it is only our duty to do. There is even that which not to do would be folly or sin even to malignity. A meritorious act stands on a higher moral platform, and is the work only of a fully-developed moral nature. At the last it may be ours to hear the words, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat," etc. But even then, so deep must be our consciousness of the gifts of grace as set over our feeble works, that such a reward is scarcely conceivable. But at the outset faith as a purely receptive act can pretend to no merit. It is simply the hand of the suppliant stretched forth to receive. And yet—

6. It is a truly probational act. Probational on the negative side because its absence is full proof of the evil choice. "He that believeth not is judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil. For every one that doeth ill hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved." Unbelief is thus the rejection of light and truth and the choice of evil. And is even probational on the positive side, because the reception of the light implies the choice of good, and though that choice still needs to be finally established, and to that end must advance to the

higher stages of moral action, even already the man who thus believes is not judged for his coming to the light puts him in the way of doing truth and works which one day will be fully "manifest that they have been wrought in God." Hence the man who thus believes passes out of death and condemnation, and "cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." The believing reception of the truth has admitted into the soul the seeds of eternal life, for this is life eternal, "That they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom Thou hast sent, even Jesus Christ." He that thus "believeth hath eternal life." The act of faith which accepts Christ, though without merit, as a purely receptive act, is yet fully a moral act, placing us on the side of truth and right and of God and Christ, and hence is truly probational under the Gospel dispensation of Salvation. As Christ stands at the door of each heart and knocks, the opening or closing of the door decides eternal destiny.

We may now turn to consider the place of this act of justifying faith in the inner probational life of the Christian.

1. It follows repentance. The implicit faith of repentance must prepare the way for its more definite and conscious faith. It would not be proper to prescribe any definite measure or outward form for this repentance, before faith can be exercised; and yet in some sense penitence must have its perfect work. At least, true conviction, the penitent attitude of conscience, and

true decision, the penitent attitude of will, are essential. The other elements may vary according to time and circumstances, and of all God alone is judge. The power of this higher faith is His gift and comes to the prepared heart.

2. It is distinctly based upon and appropriates to itself the promises of Christ as set forth in the Gospel, more especially the promises which offer to us the pardon of sin.

3. The act of faith is itself a taking possession of God's gift. "Believe that ye have received and ye shall have." It hence leads directly to the next element in the Christian way of salvation by which it in turn is perfected as faith.

Assurance.

Faith as we have thus described it, while from the human side it is an act of yielding the will, the trust, and the allegiance of the heart to Christ, has in itself an element of assurance. It is "the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." But we have seen that in its very effort after these unseen things it rises toward possession. Assurance is the full possession, faith bringing the unseen into spiritual sight. It is the perfection of that intuition of God's love to us sinners in Christ that was already germinant in faith. This intuition is the work of the Holy Spirit in its incipient, as well as in its perfect form. There is an assurance, *i.e.* a certainty of truth in conviction itself which is wrought in the conscience by the Holy Spirit. So in justifying

faith there is an assurance of the promises. The provisions of mercy are all in Christ, are seen by the light of the Spirit to be so certain that the soul casts itself upon them with strong confidence. It is only on the basis of this assured certainty that the moral act of faith becomes possible. This again is the work of the Holy Spirit opening up to the soul first the light of right and then the light of mercy in Christ, and finally the full light of God's redeeming love. It is this full work of the Spirit that is spoken of in the New Testament as the gift of the Holy Ghost and the Witness of the Spirit. "Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father,'" and "Hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which was given unto us."

In using the term intuition to represent this certainty or assurance of faith which underlies even the incipient forms of faith, it is not intended to assert that it is innate or independent of communication from without. It comes to us by the promises of the Divine Word, but the Holy Spirit so applies these that as they are presented assurance springs up within. This convincing power of the Holy Spirit carries our faith forward from one step of our salvation to another, and the assured faith of each step becomes the basis for the higher faith which reaches to the step beyond until the revelation of God's love is perfected in our hearts.

Assurance. But while this element of assurance runs through the whole religious life and is its very foundation as a living by Divine truth, and is throughout the work of the Holy Spirit, the term is especially used of that measure and form of assurance which follows justifying faith. It is clearly the teaching of the New Testament that the Christian is not to rest in any imperfect hope, or uncertain confidence as to his relation to God through Christ; but that it is his privilege to know that he has passed from death unto life, to be justified by faith; to know now that he is a child of God, and that his sins are forgiven for His name's sake. This assurance is presented by the New Testament both as direct or intuitive, and indirect or verified.

Direct + Indirect.

The direct assurance or immediate conscious knowledge through the Holy Spirit of God as our Father is expressed in such a passage as Gal. iv. 6: "Because ye are sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The indirect assurance or verification of our direct confidence is presented in 1 John iii. 14: "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren;" and to such verification we are exhorted by St Paul, "Try your own selves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves."

Assurance under both these forms lies in and constitutes the Christian consciousness; but in the first case that consciousness is turned directly

toward the love of God. In the second case it is introspective and puts to the test of the Word our own moral and religious character. It is the first form of assurance which is the immediate answer of the Spirit to our faith. Both may be referred to in such passages as Rom. viii. 15, 16: "Ye received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God;" and Eph. i. 13, 14, "In whom, having also believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of His glory."

Both aspects of this assurance are thus by St Paul included in that baptism of the Holy Spirit which was the common experience of all believers in the Apostolic age and which is so often referred to in the Acts and the Epistles.

Difficulty is sometimes experienced by the young Christian in distinguishing faith from assurance. It is quite unnecessary to perplex ourselves with this question. Assurance is the gift of the Spirit, faith is our act based upon that gift and is enlarged by a still fuller assurance. Both meet in consciousness, but in faith we consciously turn toward God, and in assurance which is God's answer to faith the promise fills us with joy and peace in believing. Hence assurance becomes the channel of all the fruits of the Spirit appearing in our conscious inner

life, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. These all have their root in love, and as John teaches, "we love God because He first loved us."

The gift of the Spirit which brings to us the assurance of God's love thus introduces us into the full possession of the blessings of salvation as provided for us in Christ, and to the consideration of those we next turn.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTATE OF SALVATION

THE Christian man who has thus entered into possession of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus stands in a position of pre-eminent moral privilege, in a new relation to God, and is endowed with a corresponding holy character. He has entered upon this estate through a marked crisis of moral and religious experience, including three prominent elements, repentance, faith, and assurance. This crisis in the New Testament history of the Apostolic Church always appears as distinctly marked, and is a great transition from the state of sin, darkness, alienation from God and spiritual death, to the new state of salvation, reconciliation, light, and life in Christ. This transition is the work of the Spirit and Word of God, with such probational yielding of our will and of faith as God has made possible to the sinner through His prevenient grace. Under the Gospel dispensation this transition becomes all important. All other dispensations resting in the penitent fear of God and in the service of preliminary probation are without this marked experience of Christianity, or enjoy it only as an exceptional privilege and a prophetic anticipation

of the good things to come. But under the Gospel the preparatory probation of repentance is but an embryonic condition, as in biology we still find the higher orders of life passing for a little time through forms of life that are the full normal type of lower orders. But to the Christian this embryonic condition is but the passing through the necessary preliminary to that moral new birth through which we become in the Christian sense the sons of God and members of Christ's body.

The new relation upon which we thus enter is one unspeakably great and glorious. To it St Paul applies the prophetic words of Isaiah: "Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man. Whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him," and adds, "But unto us God revealed them through the Spirit."

The estate of blessings of salvation which we enjoy through the Gospel is emphatically a matter of revelation. It was revealed to the Church and to the world at Pentecost through the gift of the Holy Spirit. On that day first the hundred and twenty and then three thousand others through their preaching entered into its possession. Its revelation was at the same time a living experience in the hearts of men saved from their sins. And the revelation is repeated in the living experience of every sinner who through repentance and faith enters upon its possession. In each of our hearts Christ must be thus revealed

the hope of glory. We thus enter at this point upon the study of Christianity as a living fact known and read of all men, known of each Christian man in the conscious experience of his own heart, and known to the whole world by its living fruits. Where these fruits are clearly manifest scepticism can scarcely find place. The living Christian brings all the facts and principles and teachings of the Christian religion to a test in concrete form.

And yet, like all things in which man takes part, the concrete example is imperfect. The perfect ideal is that given by the inspiring Spirit at the beginning, and that ideal of what every Christian should be we have set before us in the Apostolic writings. It is an ideal which can be understood only by the light of the Spirit in individual experience. The ideal presented in the Apostolic Word and interpreted through our personal though imperfect experience is thus to be our source of truth here.

To present the greatness, the fulness, and the glory of the Christian's estate of salvation the Apostles exhausted almost every conceivable form of analogy and illustration. But historically they were led to three lines of presentation, which though originally and even yet tropical or metaphorical in their character, have entered into all our Christian doctrine and given vocabulary to Christian theology. These terms are doubtless the best that the language of man can afford or the mind of man conceive. And yet it must not

be forgotten that they but illustrate the things of God after the analogy of human things, and that the different human types represent not separate and independent things, but only different imperfect human views of what is one to the perfect thought of God. When we speak of justification, adoption and calling, or election, we too often regard them as separate and distinct acts of God, instead of considering them as they are, as one fulness and indivisible unity of grace and mercy in Him.

The three analogies under which the estate of salvation is presented to us in the New Testament are drawn from the three greatest things in human life. These are the family, the State, and the temple. These are in one respect, it is true, more than analogies, for these were not first and independent, and God's things conceived after their likeness; but the Divine things were first and the earthly modelled to represent them. The earthly were made after the pattern shown on the Mount. The Divine authority is the source of all human authority, "there is no power but of God." God is "the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named"; and as of the New Jerusalem "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof," so the eternal place of Divine worship and service is in God Himself. But as the eternal things have been translated into these outward and visible things on earth, so the earthly and visible help to lift our thoughts to the spiritual and eternal.

Under each of these three representations, the State, the family, and the temple, we have in regard to our salvation—

1. An act of God's mercy as supreme in each.

2. A new relation in which we are placed to God. This relation is at once religious and moral and probational.

3. A correspondent change of inward character, and new obligations of life.

The threefold analogy is thus carried out each in its three elements as follows:

(1) The supreme act of God's saving grace is called—

(*a*) Under the analogy of the State, a justifying from sin.

(*b*) Under the analogy of the family, an adoption or begetting again into the family of God.

(*c*) Under the analogy of the temple, a calling or election as the Lord's consecrated ones for holy service.

(2) The new relation to God is described in the same way:

(*a*) Justification or righteousness, the true relation of good citizens to government and law.

(*b*) Sonship or the children of God.

(*c*) Saints or a holy people.

(3) The corresponding character and life is described—

(*a*) By the adjective righteous and righteousness.

(*b*) As the renewing of the Holy Ghost and walking in love.

(*c*) By the terms holiness and sanctification.

In this threefold presentation of God's relation to us our relation to God and the corresponding character and life, the first analogy deals with the ethical aspect of religion as based upon the conscience. This was represented to both the Greek and Hebrew mind, and especially in the Roman world by the State, the civil authority and the law. Paul especially enlarges upon this aspect, though by no means to the exclusion of the other two. For this he was peculiarly qualified, not only by his knowledge of Roman law as a Roman citizen, but more especially by his legal studies as a Pharisee and Jewish lawyer.

The second deals especially with the religious affections, and centres in love. John as the apostle of love, the one who leaned on the Lord's breast at supper, the one to whom the Master on the Cross had said, "Behold thy mother," especially expands this aspect, reaching its climax in those wonderful words, "God is love."

The third is the side of action, consecrated service. Peter the Jew, the Apostle of the Circumcision, the man who went up to the temple at the hour of prayer, enlarges especially on this side of service, borrowing his language almost entirely from the Old Testament.

In the theological language of the schools these three presentations of salvation are known as Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification. In

our technical theology they have frequently been defined in a narrow sense as if justification were limited to the pardon or remission of sin, and adoption added to this the positive admission into the favour and family of God. This was followed by Regeneration, or the new Birth, the change of inward character; and this again by sanctification, including the holy life and the growth in holy character. These narrower definitions will scarcely bear the test of New Testament usage. There, where the language of Christianity was still in the formative stage, the words still held their touch with the historical institutions from which they were derived and the broader and more varied application natural to writers who had not yet constructed a technical theology, but borrowed the terms from the familiar institutions of human life.

In an inductive study of the religious truth of Christianity, it is perhaps safer to abide by the New Testament usage. While therefore with the New Testament writers we may retain the terms justification, adoption, regeneration, calling, election, sanctification, and holiness, we shall classify them under the presentation of salvation to which they belong, using justification, adoption, and sanctification as the three leading terms.

Justification.

This term is largely employed by St Paul, and in its more limited sense almost exclusively by

him. It is not strictly a forensic term as has been generally supposed. The Greek word is a term of ethics rather than jurisprudence, and corresponds to the Hebrew *tsedeq* and *ts'dakah*. With the Greeks it had entered, perhaps, even more into their religious conception than into jurisprudence, as may be seen from the writings of Plutarch. To the Hebrew mind it had been interpreted by the teaching of the Pharisees whose aim and boast was the attainment of righteousness. This teaching was familiar to St Paul, in fact his whole life up to the time of his conversion had been fashioned by it. It, therefore, very naturally entered by way of antithesis into his conception of Christianity. It was to him a new righteousness bestowed by God, not of works lest any man should boast.

Justification is thus to the mind of Paul not a mere metaphorical term borrowed from human courts of justice and to be interpreted by forensic methods of procedure whether in Roman or other law, but a term of ethical religion derived from the theology of the straitest Jewish sect. To them right relation to God, *i.e.* conscious rightness with God, was to be attained by perfect fulfilment of the works of their law, which was not a mere political law nor yet a system of ethics, but a theocratic law placing the whole nation in direct relation to God. Justification or righteousness, therefore, was essentially to him right relation to God, not as before any metaphorical bar of judgment but as manifest in his own religious con-

sciousness. The doctrine of a future judgment added intensity to this consciousness and kept it alive when endangered by the busy things of the world. But we have only to read the second and the seventh of Romans to see that what Paul seeks is righteousness in our conscious relation to God. In the first of Romans he proves what the Pharisee would readily admit, that the Gentile world under the light of nature are without this righteousness. In the second chapter he proves the same of the Jews, on the same principle, their lack of conformity to the moral law showing that their boasting is due to moral blindness. He summons all before the bar of conscience and of moral law, that "every mouth may be stopped and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God." If men will but open their eyes and consider their works in the light of moral law, they must see that by works of law no man living can be justified. Paul in this attack upon the Pharisaic doctrine of righteousness is following the very spirit of the teaching of Christ, who in the same way pronounced the Pharisees hypocrites and blind leaders of the blind, and exposed their inward moral rottenness which they endeavoured to conceal by outward ceremonial works, and a narrow verbal interpretation and fulfilment of law. In the seventh chapter he illustrates this by his own experience, where not the letter of law but the spiritual law, as soon as he came to understand, or, as he puts it, it came home to him, stirred up his sinful

nature within and brought him consciously under sentence of death. Paul's whole conception of righteousness was thus not forensic after the ideal of Roman law, but religious; a right relation to God of which conscience must bear witness. Hence when he himself came into possession of this righteousness by faith in Christ, he writes: "Our glorying is this the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God we behaved ourselves in the world."

This righteousness, as presented by St Paul, is the result of God's free grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is not attained by outward and formal compliance with law, not even the Jewish theocratic law, but by faith in Christ. It is thus bestowed by God as a definite gift in time and so received by each individual believer in Christ. It must not be confounded with the merciful grace which, through the gift of His Son, provided salvation for a lost world. It is an individual blessing bestowed in time upon individual men. To the sick of the palsy it was as distinct and individual as the healing of his body, for He who said, "Arise, take up thy bed and go to thy house"; said first, "Thy sins are forgiven." It is something still to be received by the three thousand penitents on the day of Pentecost, when Peter says, "be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus unto the remission of your sins." So Paul called God "the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus."

In its essence this gift bestowed by God and received by men is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. So Paul in illustrating this blessing from the experience of David quotes the words, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin." But this pardon restores to full and gracious acceptance with God for "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

This gracious pardon is bestowed and received through the mediation of Jesus Christ, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith by His blood." "We are justified through His blood," "reconciled to God through the death of His Son"; God "reconciled us to Himself through Christ." Such are the expressions by which Paul connects this grace with the mediation of Christ. It is conditioned on faith, and so linked into the new probation. This faith is specifically known as justifying faith, and has already been considered as the specific probational test under the Gospel.

Finally its full assurance is received in the gift of the Holy Ghost. It was as remission of sins was offered and accepted by faith that the first Gentile converts received the gift, and of these Peter says afterwards, "God who knoweth the heart bear them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost; even as He did unto us." This justification, or remission of sins, or reconciliation to God, stands thus as the direct and immediate result of

the great probational crisis of repentance and faith under the Gospel.

Corresponding to the Divine act of forgiveness so manifested in the conscience, and attested by the Holy Spirit, is a new permanent relationship to God in Christ Jesus. This is expressed by the noun δικαιοσυνη, righteousness, in the writings of St Paul. In the other New Testament writers this word denotes either the character established by a right life, or the right course of life by which such character is established. Paul uses it about sixty times, and always seemingly in this sense of conscious right relation to God. He associates it with freedom from condemnation, with peace with God and joy in the Holy Ghost. He frequently calls it righteousness of God, not as God's subjective righteous personal character, but the genitive of origin, the righteousness which comes from God, which is His gracious gift to men. This use of the term seems to be without exception in the writings of Paul.

By this term St Paul sets before us the Christian state as one of conscious rightness with God, hence as a state of strong manly confidence toward God, as freedom from the . ile spirit of fear engendered by the law. Hence he exhorts the Galatians, "With freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage." Here, perhaps, is a passing reference to the Roman law of status comparing this new estate to the "libertas" with which a slave was made a freedman. It is this

new and blessed estate, not only of rightness before God, but also of Christian moral liberty, which serves God in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter which Paul contrasts with his old Pharisaic status, and counts all his advantages under the law but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.

The relation of this right moral status to right character and right life is obvious both in our moral nature and in the teaching of the New Testament. Paul exhorts, as we have received Christ Jesus, so we should walk in Him. Those who are in Christ Jesus, freed from all condemnation, "walk not after the flesh but after the spirit," and so "the ordinance of the law" is truly "fulfilled in them." The right moral relation strengthens the whole spiritual man for the right life before God. The law as stirring up our moral nature was weak through the flesh. But what it could not do God has accomplished by the propitiation made by His Son, "cleansing our conscience from dead works," in the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "to serve the living God."

It will be observed, however, that in the New Testament treatment of justification, while the right life and the right character are associated with it through the cleansing of the conscience and the gift of the spirit, and the entrance of the justified man upon a spiritual service, the emphasis is laid on the act of God and the new relations in which the sinner is thereby placed to Him. It is more especially these aspects of salvation which

Paul treats in opposition to the legal theology of the Pharisees, and these aspects the term is best fitted to set forth. The new nature and the new life are more fully set forth under the other analogies. This would seem to justify the Protestant theology in its emphasis upon justification as a change of our relation to God. But if that emphasis leads us to overlook the fact such relation is inseparably associated with a change of nature and of life, whether expressed by a related or by an entirely different word, then our more limited definition may lead us to serious practical error. In God's order there can be no separation of the three elements of this salvation, God's gracious act, our new relation, and our new character and life.

Adoption.

Preliminary Historical Note.

Prior to the rise of the Protestant theology the scholastic theological conception of this aspect of salvation centred around regeneration. This was associated with the sacrament of baptism, and constituted its saving efficacy by an operation outside of consciousness, of Divine power rather than moral influence. Through this sacramental efficacy the guilt of both original and actual sin was cancelled, and the germ of new life implanted. At the same time the person so re-

generated was made a member of Christ's body the Church. The awakened sense of sin, repentance, faith, acceptance with God, as well as growth in all the graces of holiness, were fruits of this sacramental regeneration. Calvin, who first worked out a system of Protestant theology, transferred this secret operation of regenerating grace to the elect either with or without the intervention of the sacraments. The results of this grace, followed in repentance and faith and through faith justification as the pardon of sin and conscious acceptance with God was bestowed. Adoption and sanctification as a progressive renewal of the nature followed. This introduced two important Protestant elements of doctrine; first, religious individualism, the right and responsibility of each individual for personal access to God and personal relation to God in Christ. This was done by placing less emphasis upon the mediating Church and sacraments and more upon the operation of Divine grace in the individual soul. Secondly, by giving greater emphasis to faith as the immediate antecedent or condition of justification and adoption. Both these changes tended to bring the process of human salvation out of the region of mysterious operation of grace into the sphere of conscious moral and probational influence, and at the same time to develop more fully individual responsibility and direct relation to God in which true religion must essentially consist.

The evangelical Arminians, especially Wesley

and his school, made a very important advance in the development of these Protestant principles, an advance which has leavened the theology of all evangelical Protestantism in our time.

1. By separating prevenient grace from regeneration, making it the universal influence of the Spirit and truth upon the minds of men for their salvation, and finding in it the foundation for a true renewal of human probation in Christ.

2. By making repentance and faith the true probational works, based upon prevenient grace, and making them the true probational conditions of the full blessings of salvation, including regeneration as well as justification, adoption, and sanctification.

3. By emphasising the doctrine of personal assurance of salvation, thus bringing the foundation of the Christian life back to its New Testament form, of a concentrated crisis of religious experience beginning with conviction and ending with the gift of the Holy Ghost in its two elements of assurance and regeneration. From this follows the permanent Christian life. It will be seen that this perfects the Protestant principles—

1. By founding the whole process of salvation upon God's revealed truth applied by the Spirit.

2. By bringing this process fully into the sphere of conscious moral influence and activity, and hence of true probation and conscious personal relation to God.

3. By making faith in Christ the true and only

condition of salvation, and an act of true probational responsibility, entirely unfettered by any secret decree or unconscious operation of invincible grace, whether sacramental or otherwise. The individual is thus brought into direct personal and responsible relations to God.

We may now turn to the New Testament presentation of that aspect of salvation which finds its symbol in the family. Of all presentations of our salvation this is the most prominent and the richest. Our Lord Himself pre-eminently revealed God as our Father in heaven. One of His most beautiful presentations of the salvation of a sinner is the return of the prodigal son to his father's heart and home. The very foundation of the Christian faith is that He is the Eternal Son who is in the bosom of the Father and reveals Him.

When we come more specifically to the blessings of salvation, we find in all the writers of the New Testament a wonderful variety and richness of terms drawn from this relation. These terms are sometimes drawn from the Hebrew laws of family life and from the Hebrew idea of the chosen people as collectively God's Son: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Into this relation to God of His chosen people the Gentiles were admitted by religious rites of purification which were known to the Jews as the new birth. This term our Lord borrows, but at once raises to a

higher, a profoundly real, a universal, and a spiritual significance. Not the Gentile alien alone, but the Jewish ruler, devout and sincere though he was, must be born again, otherwise even he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. This new birth is not a mere ceremonial purification of the body by water baptism. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The foundation which was thus laid is carried through the Apostolic teaching associated with the gift of the Holy Ghost and the ordinance of baptism as the outward expression of that faith upon which this gift is conditioned, and itself the symbol of the inward renewal wrought by the Holy Spirit.

Upon this doctrine of our Lord associating the Sonship with the chosen holy people and with admission into their fellowship by a new birth from above, Paul builds directly, calling upon the new people of God to separate themselves from all uncleanness, and applying to them the promise of Jeremiah, "I will be to you a Father,

"And ye shall be to me sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

But in Paul's mind it appears also under a new illustration drawn from the Roman law of adoption, by which an alien became a member of the family. The Divine grace by which the sinner is accepted in Christ is an adoption into the family of God. Christ came "that we might receive the adoption of sons." And the Spirit by which we

are at once assured of this sonship, and so renewed that we are restored to the likeness of our Father, is called the spirit of adoption as well as the spirit of God's Son sent into our hearts, "crying Abba, Father." Thus Paul enlarges the Hebrew idea by the analogy of the Roman law, and makes it more personal and individual, at the same time that it is in the closest relation to the spiritual teaching of Christ, since the adoption is accompanied by the regenerating power of the witnessing Spirit, who is thus "the spirit of adoption."

To the simple Hebrew idea Peter returns. To him, after the type of the Old Covenant, the chosen people of God are "an elect race," the enlarged family idea, "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light"; "which in time past were no people, but now are the people of God, which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." Into this chosen race "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," according to His great mercy, "begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." "And we were thus begotten again, not of corruptible seed (that is, generations of men subject to moral decay), but of incorruptible, the Word of God which liveth and abideth." So St James: "Of His own will begat He us by the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

It was finally left for St John to gather up all these ideas into a perfect whole, and dropping the limitations of human forms and analogies, to make them a living, and as nearly as human thoughts can grasp or human language express, a literal setting forth of God's relation to us and our relation to Him. Paul had already exhausted all human analogies when he called God "the Father from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named." But John lays his foundations first of all in the idea that "God is love." Side by side with this is the conception of "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father," and by whom He is revealed. Next is God's love to us which "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." And to those who thus believe on His name, this Son "gave the right to become children of God." And it is with this golden line of love coming out of the depths of the eternal being of God, and reaching us through the infinite self-sacrificing love of His own Son, before Him, that the Apostle exclaims, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God, and such we are."

This whole subject of Adoption is thus unfolded in the Apostolic age, not as a hard dogma of the schools, but as a living, joyous religious faith. It affords a marked illustration of the power of religious faith to penetrate to the pro-

foundest truth of real being. No truth to-day has deeper hold of the world's heart than that which is here revealed. Let us now turn to the more special analysis of this New Testament conception of salvation.

1. Like Justification this aspect of our salvation is grounded on the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is Christ that gives us right to become the children of God. God sent forth His Son "that we might receive the Adoption of Sons." Adoption is equally with justification an aspect of the work of Christ in our salvation. Justification represents God's free grace or mercy. We are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Adoption represents His overflowing love. He "foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

Like justification, adoption is conditioned on faith. "As many as received Him to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Again, as with justification, adoption is ministered through the Holy Spirit, which in consequence is called the spirit of adoption as He is elsewhere called the spirit of grace and the spirit of holiness. Our adoption is thus called receiving the spirit of adoption, and God's gracious act is a sending forth of "the spirit of His Son into our hearts crying Abba, Father."

= Definition of Adoption =

We may thus define adoption as the gracious act of God, through Jesus Christ, conditioned on faith, wherein for Christ's sake, He accepts us as His children, and by His spirit attests the Father's love to our hearts.

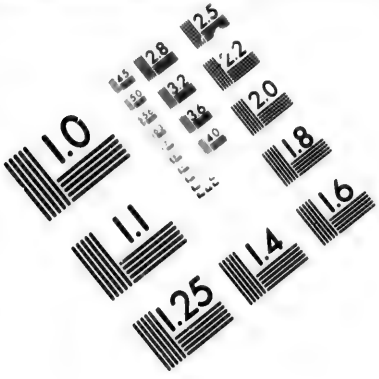
We may now turn from the Divine act of acceptance to the new relation and privileges in which we are thus instated. Paul's term υἱοθεσια, borrowed from Roman law and custom, perhaps rather expresses the Divine act of grace. But if so, in the term, as in the expression, sons of God or children of God, is bound up a new and abiding relationship to God. And as the conscious outcome of justification is an abiding sense of "peace with God," so that of the Sonship is the spirit of joyous hope.

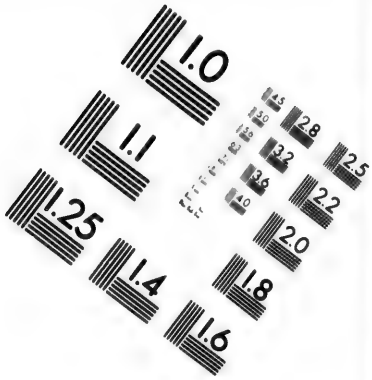
We have Paul's presentation of the privileges and obligations of this relation in Rom. viii. 14-17. It is the privilege not only of a joyous confidence toward God, but also of a Divine kinship which makes all things ours as we are Christ's and Christ is God's. It turns even sufferings into glory, making all things work together for good to them that love God. And it involves the responsibility of "walking after the Spirit," "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God."

Another presentation we have in 1 Pet. i. 3-5 and 13-23. There again the privilege is "a living hope," and "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are

guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." So also the obligation is to be "children of obedience," to "be holy in all manner of living," to "pass the time of our sojourning in fear," to "purify our souls in obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, from the heart fervently." And St John in his own way repeats almost the same ideas. "To be called children of God" is the gift of the wonderful love of the Father. And as children it is not yet made manifest what we shall be; but "we know that if He be manifested we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him, even as He is." And again the obligation follows: "Every one that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." The child of God is called to a sinless life. Thus with each of these New Testament "pillars" this aspect of salvation is one of religious affections. Like justification, it demands right life, but it does so not so much from the side of conscience and moral law as from that of love. The service to be rendered is not only pure, holy, right, but the joyous loving obedience of children as well. Our life is a preparation, not only for a day of final righteous judgment, but also for a day of glorious heritage of the kingdom prepared for us by our Father. In these words our Lord combines the two aspects of our relation to God in Christ Jesus our Lord, as it will appear in the great consummation.

We may now turn to the third element in this aspect of our salvation. As justifying grace not





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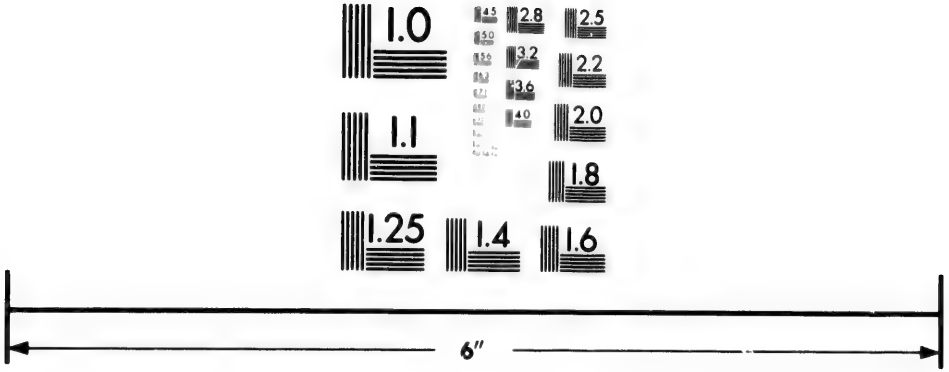

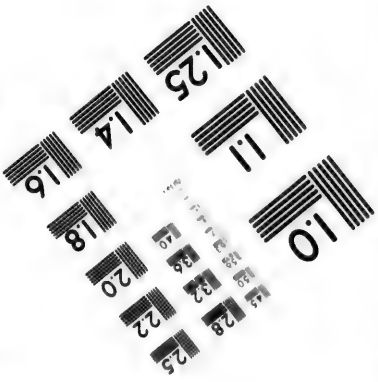

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only places us in the right moral relation toward God, but with the assurance of this grace gives us new and right intention towards God, working in us and through us the right life, so the grace of adoption brings to us the spirit of filial love. Because He first loved us, we love. Love begets love; God's love revealed by His Spirit creates a new and holy human love. The children must indeed be like the Father, sinless; but more than that, they must be "imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell." Our humble service of love as children is thus like the great oblation of love of the only-begotten Son Himself, an offering and a sacrifice well-pleasing to God. The love of God created in our hearts by the Holy Spirit is thus the fountain of the entire new life, and itself the supreme element of the renewed nature. Thus with Paul it stands at the head of the fruits of the Spirit, "Love, joy, peace," etc., and is "the fulfilling of the law."

Thus our salvation, whether viewed as justification or adoption, brings with it not only a new relation to God, giving rise to varied new elements of religious faith and service, but also a new heart for that service. In Christ Jesus we, who were dead through trespasses and sin, are quickened together with Christ. In Christ we are new creatures. The old things are passed away; they are become new. We have put on the

new man which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him, and after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

In this entire presentation of the work of the regenerating Spirit under these two aspects of our salvation it is clearly spoken of as a definite past event, taking place at a known past time, and a matter of definite conscious experience to the members of all these churches. This is indicated, not only by the aorist tense, which is almost uniformly used in these references, but also by the entire manner of speaking of it. It stands before us as a part of that blessed experience conditioned upon and following repentance and faith by which we become members of Christ, and saved through His grace.

The modern conception which has been so fruitful of results in the evangelistic and missionary work of the century seems to be the conception of the New Testament. The other conception appears largely in history from the third century onward; while not perhaps absolutely fatal to the work of salvation through Christ, it seems seriously to obscure both its nature and its operation. By substituting occult processes for the definite moral influences set forth in the New Testament it certainly makes the Christian religion less spiritual in its methods if not in its results.

Sanctification.

The third great aspect of our salvation contemplates God's saved ones, not as individuals justified before God, nor as a family of spiritual children, but in a collective capacity as a church, or house, or temple, in which God is to be served and worshipped, and which all His people are set apart as priests to minister His worship and service and thereby to save the world.

This analogy is not taken from religious worship and temple service at large, but is based upon the ancient and separated people and upon the Mosaic institutions. In this way it is a comparison of spiritual things with spiritual, and so gives us not a mere analogy or typical representation of God's grace, but real principles of God's method of grace, wrought out in the history of the ancient people in a more earthly form, but perfected in spiritual character, power, and method of work under the Gospel.

This presentation of the religion of Christ enters very largely into the conceptions of the leading New Testament writers. Peter, Paul and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews especially give it prominence, and it enters largely into the imagery of the Apocalypse.

In one sense it furnishes the highest aspect of our salvation inasmuch as it regards us no longer as individuals, but embraces us in an eternal purpose of God, which runs through all the ages, extends to all nations, takes in all human history,

and receives its final consummation in the eternity out of which it springs.

The terms which are used to describe this new view of God's saving grace, and of our relation to it, and of the consequent new life and character, are remarkably rich and varied. A large class of them are borrowed from the Old Testament and from the ancient people of God, and the service of the temple and the tabernacle. But another class of them, used almost exclusively by St Paul and those influenced by his teaching, belong to a form of thought more speculative in its character, and the historical relations of which, if such exist, have not yet been traced. The questions of God's purpose of the ages and his foreordination or predestination scarcely appear in the Old Testament. The nearest approach to them is perhaps in the Book of Ecclesiastes. But even there the problems presented are rather those of the reasons of particular events, rather than the formation of one grand concept of all things as the perfect plan of God. The same is also true of the Book of Job. From Paul's own language we judge that this was through the inspiring Spirit—his final contribution to Christian thought, at once a religious faith and a philosophy.

To understand this new point of view it is most important to observe that the terms by which it is expressed as well as the problems which it involves grow out of the change of dispensations.

We have already seen how under the teaching of Peter, Paul and John, salvation comes to each individual on distinctly probational terms, as God's pardoning mercy and adopting grace. These blessings come to Jew and Gentile alike, for there was no difference, all were alike sinners, and if justified or purified at all, must be so by faith. Peter and Paul alike recognised this. Both also recognised that the people thus saved by faith were the true Israel of God, that to them and to them alone were applicable in the true and spiritual sense all the terms which belonged to God's ancient chosen people. But at this point they parted and Paul passed beyond Peter. To Peter as to Paul the men who were saved by faith in the name of Christ and had received the witness or seal of the Holy Ghost purifying their hearts by faith were indeed the true "Israel," or to use Peter's own words, the "elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession"; and to them was now committed the mission of the ancient Israel, "that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." Peter also with Paul recognised the rejection of the unbelieving from this true Israel and the mercy which, through the Gospel, was now admitting so many from the Gentile world who before had not been a people, to a share in the blessings of the covenant. But in all this Peter so far as we know saw no break in the validity of the ancient dispensation; no transfer of God's

promises and purposes to a new body. He would have kept the new wine with all its new spiritual life in the old vessels. He would still go to the temple at the hour of prayer, and religiously make the old institutions of Moses the vehicle of the new faith, adding thereto the simple sacrament of Christ. Paul saw that this was impossible in itself, unnecessary inasmuch as the believer was "complete in Christ," and to his inspired faith contrary to the Divine purpose. But this involved the ending of the Mosaic institutions as waxing old and ready to decay. It was in reality the rejection of the ancient people, as the great majority of them refused the Gospel. It involved the cessation of the Mosaic worship, at least as acceptable to God, and its replacement by the pure, simple and spiritual worship of Christianity. It was in fact the replacement of God's ancient people by the new Christian Church largely taken from the Gentile world, and the transfer to this new body of the covenant promises and privileges in the purpose of God.

Under this view of Christianity as not a mere continuance and extension of the Old Dispensation, but in itself a New Covenant founded on better promises and replacing the Old, there arise the great problems of the unity and harmony of the purposes of God in the world's salvation. These problems he discusses in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh of Romans, and their solution in what he calls the dispensation of the mystery

which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things.

This mystery thus unfolded to Paul was not a mysterious necessitarian doctrine of individual salvation, utterly inconsistent with his teaching of individual salvation through a truly probational faith on the one side and with the broad views of the universal character of the provisions of the Gospel which were the glory of his teaching on the other; but it was a revelation to him of the fact "that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus." In other words, it was that *the entire body of the Gentiles* who, under the old dispensation, were "separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world, are made nigh in the blood of Christ." It was that Christ hath now broken down the middle wall of partition, and hath abolished the law of ordinances which was against the whole Gentile world separating them from the Jews. Or, as he puts it in another place, he nailed this handwriting of ordinances which separated Jew and Gentile to His cross. It was that out of both Jew and Gentile He is creating "one new man in Himself so making peace."

It will be seen that all this, while it relates to the way of human salvation and brings every saved sinner into new religious relations, is a predestination, a purpose, a foreordination of

God, not that this sinner shall be saved and that sinner left in his sins, but a purpose that in Christ Jesus the entire Church shall be constituted upon this broadly universal and spiritual basis; and when he speaks of this and the other body of Christians as being thus predestinated, he is but pointing to them as an individual historical example of this broad and universal purpose of God in Christ.

This doctrine of Paul, so far from being opposed to his doctrine of a true ethical and religious probation for every man under the universal provisions of the Gospel, is absolutely essential to it. Before Christ came the Jews stood in a position of peculiar advantage, the Gentiles in another and far inferior position of probational advantages. Now the new probational terms of the Gospel are freely open to all, and all the promises of Abraham are offered to Jew and Gentile alike. This is the only true universalism and probational equality.

But to return once more to the new body of God's people thus formed. In that body every man saved through faith in Christ finds his place; therein he is called; he becomes thereby one of God's elect; and all the privileges and responsibilities of this calling and election become his. This gives rise to a completely new view of personal salvation, linking it with God's "eternal purpose" as to the world's salvation and the body of His people through whom that salvation is to be accomplished. Into the fulfilment of that

purpose every individual Christian is called, and his highest probational responsibilities are associated with his position as one of God's elect people.

Under this highest of all its aspects our salvation includes—

1. A calling and election of God as one of His chosen people.

2. An estate of high privilege and responsibility into which we are thus introduced.

3. An inward and outward life of holy service by which we truly fulfil our office. This is the New Testament doctrine of sanctification or holiness.

1. The calling and election of the holy nation or royal priesthood.

This call lays the foundation for a visible and active organisation of God's people in the world. It is the public or outward and visible side of religion, as justification and adoption represent the inward and personal. It brings the individual, who through faith in Christ is pardoned and accepted at the very same moment by the same Divine act of grace, into the unity of the body of Christ or the fellowship of the Saints. The terms used, calling and election, are borrowed from the Old Testament or rather from the later Old Testament, though the facts upon which they are founded date from the call of Abraham. This call from the beginning was inseparably connected with God's purpose for the world's salvation. The promise to Abraham was, "In

thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." He was to be the agent by which God's purpose for the world's salvation is to be accomplished.

Under the Old Testament, this man, his family, the nation descended from him, are called and chosen, and through them the purpose of God is carried forward in that nation until of its stock Christ was born. It is clear that the individual members of this nation stood each on his own personal probation before God. Many were not such as could finally enter into the Kingdom of God. The individual religious life of the best of them was often imperfect, and their sense of individual responsibility as God's chosen people equally defective. The holy seed, the substance for the Divine purpose was often a small remnant. Among these again there was special calling and election. Such were the whole line of the prophets from Samuel onwards, and such were great leaders and instruments of God as Moses, Joshua, David, and Zerubbabel. The calling especially of these was not without probational conditions, both of the individual and the nation, and a Saul was rejected and again the great body of the people at the captivity. But as yet the individual spiritual life was not sufficiently developed to call each individual to an active part in the great work of the Divine Kingdom. The nation as a whole was called, and its great national movement was directed, and its leaders religious and even political were called and endued with the Holy Spirit for their work, but as

yet the great body of the people were but the material of the chosen people, and as Paul says they were not all Israel who were of Israel. But the time was to come when upon all the people the spirit should be poured out when the servants and the hand-maidens should prophesy, and when the feeblest should be as David, and the house of David as the angel of the Lord. When Paul transfers the terms calling and election to the Christian Church, he clearly intimates that this new age has arrived and that now the calling and election are not by fleshly descent, but by inward spiritual relationship. Hence the children of Abraham are the men "who walk in the steps of the faith which he had" even before he received the covenant ordinance. "They which be of faith the same are the sons of Abraham." This historical development makes clear the fact that the relations and method of God in election were fixed by the wise and righteous purpose of God as Paul sets forth. This calling and election is God's purpose of providing the world's salvation through man, a purpose which includes Christ Himself as pre-eminently God's elect servant, and the spiritual head of the whole elect people who are "chosen in him."

On the other hand when this privilege is linked with individual salvation and so extended to every believer, we see that it becomes thoroughly probational, making it necessary for each individual to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure.

The Divine call which we are now considering, and which is co-ordinate with if not synonymous with election, is not thus the simple Gospel offer of salvation. In only one passage is the word "call" so used, and there it is clearly distinguished from election. Elsewhere the word "called," "the called of Christ Jesus," "called to be saints," like "elect in sanctification of the Spirit," is used as a designation of those who have accepted the Gospel offer of salvation. Their calling is not thus the offer of salvation, but a "high calling in Christ Jesus" parallel with their justification and adoption, in fact another aspect of the same Divine grace. This unity of the three is clearly set forth in Eph. i. 3-7, where the blessings bestowed "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," are enumerated as "adoption as sons," "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace," and "choosing us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love." The choosing in Christ is first because it is Paul's chief theme in this epistle as we have already seen.

This calling is generally the high claim which God makes upon us for His service, which is not only supreme duty and responsibility, but supreme privilege as well. It is a "call into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." It is a calling which demands that we "walk worthy of it." It is a calling not of the rich and noble and wise, but of things despised of men but honoured of

God. Hence it is, in the first place, essentially a call "to be saints" or to be "fellow citizens with the saints." This term saints is used everywhere in the New Testament to designate believers as in the fellowship of the Church. The very term ἐκκλησια, "called out," denotes this calling perhaps quite as much as the mere call to assemble in worship. Of this calling, saintship, the state of those set apart for God is the result.

The Divine act by which God saves His people now stands before us in all its fulness.

(1) God pardons our sins and bestows upon us His justifying grace, giving us peace with God in our conscience.

(2) He adopts us into His family as children, revealing His love in our hearts by His Holy Spirit.

(3) He makes us members of His elect people, and calls us to the high responsibilities and privileges of His saints.

This Divine act of saving grace in Christ, which is one and inseparable, is set forth in its fulness in Eph. i. 3, etc. This Divine act implies on our part a corresponding consecration of ourselves to this high service, and to this consecration Paul exhorts in such passages as Rom. xii. 1. The analogies of the Old Testament service are largely applied to this aspect of salvation, especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, more particularly the sprinkling of the blood of Christ and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

2. The estate of responsibility upon which we

thus enter is largely described in the New Testament. As we have already seen, the designation most frequently used is that of SAINTS. This title or the one which we shall next consider is used by Paul in the address of every epistle to a Church or body of believers. In some the two, Saints and the Church, are combined. It is thus not so much descriptive of character as of the calling, the responsibility of this high estate and relation to God. Of some who were thus addressed Paul was obliged to say that they were yet carnal.

This term corresponds to two words in the Old Testament used to designate the chosen people. The first, *Chasidav*, describes them as the objects of God's favour; the second, *K'doshav*, as separated for His service. The New Testament idea is built upon this, though it presents a remarkable advance in the spirituality of its conception of the nature of the service required and also in its ethical perfection. Under the Old Testament this service was sometimes one of war, the execution of judgment upon all the ungodly; in the New Testament it is only a service of peace and salvation.

The second designation employed to describe God's people in this relation is *The Church*. The saints are the individual members of the Church as a collective body. As the idea of the Church becomes so important in the Christian dispensation it must be considered separately, and we need not enlarge upon it here. It is only necessary to

note that being called into the membership of the Church is in the New Testament an important element of our salvation, as there alone can we be in the full and true sense God's people.

An assembly of titles is used by Peter of this relation to God, titles drawn from the Old Testament, and all in harmony with the main ideas already presented. But apart from these titles, one has only to note the enthusiasm with which Paul speaks of the high privileges of God's people, in the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians, to see that this is regarded by him as the very crowning mercy of our salvation in Christ. Equally emphatic is he in presenting the responsibilities of this high estate, and in this he is followed by the other New Testament writers.

The estate of salvation into which we are admitted by the mercy of God in Christ is thus before us in its varied elements.

(1) A state of righteousness and peace with God.

(2) A state of Sonship, members of God's family and brethren in Christ.

(3) A state of consecration to God's service in which we recognise that individually and collectively we are not our own but His, being called to glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are His.

3. God's call, election and anointing, like the spirit of adoption creates a new heart within for this holy service. Our sanctification is not merely

formal, a new and holy relation to God, but a new heart and a new life. "Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, we have our fruit unto sanctification and the end eternal life."

This holiness is especially set forth as something to be perfected, as a progressive work both in heart and life. This is never said of our justification or adoption or regeneration. They are completed through faith in Christ Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Believers still need to be established in heart unblameable in holiness before God our Father, to be sanctified wholly as well as preserved without blame. They grow into a holy temple in the Lord. They are renewed in the spirit of their minds and "put on the new man which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth." It is thus that the Christian character is completed in its threefold aspect. The right intention, the filial love, the consecrated will, the new conscience, the new affections, the new purpose of life, all purified by the Holy Spirit and the truth. These blessings of salvation are concurrent in time, but in order of thought they stand Justification, Adoption, Sanctification. In each God acts, His grace is first and is all; each is of our high calling and privilege, right with God, sons of God, fellow-citizens with the saints; and each is an aspect of the new nature in Christ Jesus.

All centre in the gift of the Holy Ghost. This seals our pardon, witnesses our adoption, and anoints us for holy work. Our salvation is

thus one in God, in Christ and in the Holy Spirit, and yet Justification is more especially ascribed to God (Rom. viii. 33); Sonship to Christ (Pro. i. 12); and Sanctification to the Spirit (1 Pet. i. 2).

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

THE estate of salvation into which we are introduced by faith in Christ becomes the starting-point of a new life involving all moral and religious obligation. Between these Christianity knows no distinction; all moral duty becomes religious duty and all religious duty is enforced by conscience with the full strength of moral obligation. The new Christian life thus both includes and extends the highest moral life.

In the study of Christian Ethics as a part of Theology it is not necessary to enter into minute detail of particular duties, whether moral or religious. This is the less necessary as Christianity is in no sense a merely formal religion or a system of legal precepts of moral duty. It is in its very essence a religion of the spirit and not of the letter. It is distinguished by its fulness of spiritual life and not by rigid forms.

This new life takes up into itself the highest ideal of moral goodness as well as the supreme authority of moral obligation, as they are found in the moral nature of man, but so transforms and enriches these that they become in reality a new nature and a new moral life. At this point it

will be our duty to define generally the new elements which Christianity introduces into moral life. These form the distinctive features of Christian ethics.

All ethical obligation is founded on relation and natural endowment. The first determines those to whom we owe our duties, and the second defines the extent of those duties. We have already seen that the salvation which is in Christ places us in new relations and bestows upon us a new nature. In these very facts it lays the foundation for a new ethical development. Christian ethics by introducing our relations to God into the field of obligation, if nothing more, vastly enlarges that field. We shall see presently that it completely transforms it as well. All religious service becomes duty and all duty becomes the highest religious service as God's holy will. Not in outward forms and rites do we truly worship God, but in doing justly and loving mercy and walking humbly with God. "If ye love Me keep My commandments" is the final instruction of the Master; and the interpretation of His beloved disciple is this, "If we love not our brother whom we have seen how can we love God whom we have not seen." It is by this very unity of morals with religion that the strength of moral obligation is immeasurably increased, the authority of conscience reinforced.

There are four views of the nature and authority of conscience.

1. That it is the hereditary result of biological

evolution from sensations of pain and the corresponding feeling of fear. According to this theory, conscience can only augment its authority slowly through the ages under the lash of suffering. In this there is no *ought*, only a *must*, or at best a *should*.

2. That it is an ultimate element in our nature which we need not account for. This shows no way to give it new strength, no spring of new or higher moral life.

3. That it is the result of the evolution of the moral nature of the universe. This does give hope, but not to the individual. He is bound in the inflexibility of a universal movement.

4. That it is the voice of God within. This at once gives it a force of obligation, and an individuality and a fountain head of new moral life, and by linking conscience with religion renews and strengthens conscience with all the energy of the new religious life. God is not only Creator, but King, Judge and Father. The whole ethical life is by this unity of morals with religion placed upon a new, and that the very highest, basis.

The peculiarities of this new Christian ethics may be considered under the following topics:

1. The standpoint from which all duty is conceived.
2. The motive in moral action.
3. The ideal of the good.
4. Moral development.
5. The spheres of ethical activity.

The Standpoint of Christian Ethics.

In ethical philosophy we find two essentially divergent tendencies. The one is exemplified in Hedonism or Egoism, the other in Altruism. The first makes the individual self the starting-point of all ethical consideration. This does not imply that the consideration of others is excluded, as I am bound up with them and they with me, in considering myself, I must consider them. In seeking the best for myself I must seek the best for the whole, because I am part of it. But my obligations to others are secondary, my obligations to myself primary ; my individual self is the pivot around which the whole field of moral obligations centres.

Altruism, on the other hand, forgets self in the consideration of others ; and its starting-point is the rights of others, and my obligation to meet them. Self-interest and even obligation to self is subordinate to this.

In determining the starting-point of an ethical system we have by no means determined its complete development. An egoistic system may preach even the doctrine of self-denial, of justice, and of mercy, not so much from the standpoint of obligation to others, but, as in Buddhism, as the only way to freedom from sorrow in ourselves. In this and also in some other systems, we have the paradox of a perishing ego building its whole ethical life from the centre of this fleeting personality. Its ethical motive is very much the same as that of the man who lives to save his soul, for-

getting that according to Christ's teaching, he who is ready to sacrifice it for duty truly gains it. From such a standpoint duty is the right thing for self.

The starting-point of all true Christian ethics is God. The will of God is to the religious heart the supreme ideal of right, and the glory of God is the supreme end of action. The love of God is the highest of all motives. This starting-point of ethics is far superior to either the altruistic or the egoistic in the following respects:

1. The idea of God is the highest that man can form. It includes all goodness and all perfection. This is true even of the man with the most inferior ideals. God is at least his highest conception. The will of God thus lifts a man to the best that is in him, and at the same time affords the fullest scope for moral advancement.

2. The end and motive presented from this standpoint are the most impartial possible, and the most comprehensive possible, including all other true ends, and all other right motives. All things are God's, and His glory is the highest well-being of the universe, and the love of God includes the love of all His creatures.

3. It secures all that is rightly proposed from either other standpoint, and far more perfectly than is possible from this limited outlook. As God's child, living not for self but for Him, it becomes my duty to seek the highest perfection of my being for His service. As my fellow-men are also God's the same follows of them.

4. At the same time it affords the true cor-

rective to selfish passion, and to the weakness of too indulgent passion towards others. Its first requirement is self-denial, and by bringing all things before the supreme bar of the universe, it secures both egoism and altruism from weak, one-sided and limited views. The great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," gives us a starting-point for all moral action surpassing all human points of view.

Motive in Christian Ethics.

The teaching of the New Testament, as well as our best philosophy, emphasizes the fact that there is ethical quality in motive as well as in act. By motive here we mean not the objective thing which excites desire, but the desires or affections so excited as they tend to action. Christ laid the ethical foundations of His work in the Sermon on the Mount by teaching us that there are right and wrong desires and passions as well as actions. The desires are, it is true, not the direct product of the will, but spring from within ourselves. But Christ's teaching makes us responsible for the evil that we are as well as for the evil that we do. The grounds, the nature, and the limits of this responsibility form a special subject of study which belongs to natural as well as to Christian ethics, and which we cannot discuss here. We need here only point out the fact that the moral quality of motive

is emphasized in Christianity as in no other system. Other systems praise virtuous character and benevolent affections, placing them beside noble actions in the catalogue of the moral good. But as Christianity judges of the moral quality of all action in relation to God, who knoweth the secrets of the heart, so not outward results, or prescribed rules of outward act, but inward motive, intention must form the basis of its judgment. All its moral service is religious service; and in religion only the right heart is of value. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth." All life becomes, in its highest ideal, worship; and every act of life must be done in "Godly sincerity" in "Spirit and in truth," and so offered as a living sacrifice to that God who is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The ethical value of all holy action lies in the purity and perfection of motive.

Again by creating a new affection or group of affections centering in charity, Christianity itself supplies the highest and most perfect of all motives for human action. Paul has clearly seen and taught that this single motive, the Divine principle of love, may become the spring of every conceivable moral action; hence he says "Love is the fulfilling of the law." This motive not only incites to all duty, but it perfects the performance of all duty. Every moral act finds its richest and most complete perfection in that it is done with a loving heart. Even the most severe virtues are ennobled and beautified by charity. This charity,

so comprehensively set forth by our Lord in the great commandment already quoted and expanded in such rich detail by Paul in the thirteenth of first Corinthians, becomes thus a most distinctive feature of Christian ethics. Here Buddhism falls far below Christianity. It catches but fragments of the supreme motive of charity, and even its abnegation of lower passions is not from charity, not the infinite loving self-sacrifice of Christ, but the deliverance of self from sorrow.

The Christian Ideal of the Good.

Building upon these foundations of right motive and right starting-point for the apprehension of duty, the perfection of the moral life will next be moulded by the clear, intelligent, broad, apprehension of duty in all its manifold details. This general outlook over the field of our duty constitutes the Christian ideal of the perfect man in Christ, or, if taken abstractly, of the supreme good. To a church conspicuous for its beautiful exemplification of the Christian moral character, Paul puts this ideal thus: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think of these things." Such an ideal every moral system must have. It is the superior man of Confucius, and the Noble Path of Buddha, and the *Summum Bonum* of the Græco-

Roman philosophies. Christianity presents us with such an ideal in various forms, some of which are unique, and all vastly superior to the moral ideals of other systems.

1. The life of Christ, the God-man, the sinless man presents it in concrete form as a living example. The importance of the life of Jesus as an example of perfect goodness was fully appreciated by His disciples, and indeed to it our Lord Himself had called attention in those gracious words: "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Again He puts it from a single but fundamental point of view in these words: "If any man would come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." So Paul emphasizes the "mind which was also in Christ Jesus"; and Peter the example of Christ, "that ye should follow His steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth"; and John exhorts him "that saith he abideth in Him, himself also to walk even as He walked." The importance of this living example of the ideal life, and the influence which it has exerted, can only be appreciated by the careful study of the history of Christianity in the inner spiritual life of its best men.

2. The whole teaching of our Lord is filled with precepts of Christian duty. In fact, the predominantly ethical character of that teaching

has at times led men to overlook the fact that it is no less religious than ethical, and that this new ethico-religious life must be built upon a new foundation of faith. Similarly, every epistle of the New Testament abounds not only in single moral precepts, but in extended passages, some of them giving important and comprehensive summaries of Christian duty. No one can thoroughly grasp this Christian ideal of duty who has not made an extended study of the New Testament with this one point in view, and classified for himself the thousands of precepts of right-living which it contains.

3. Our Lord Himself has condensed this ethical teaching in three forms, each of which demands attention as a moral ideal. Taking them in the order of expansion, we have, first, the Golden Rule. "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them; for this is the law and the prophets." These last words indicate that Christ is here consciously and intentionally giving us a universal rule of duty, one that includes the complete spirit of the law and the prophets. We may say with confidence that it is impossible for the mind of man to devise a more perfect rule of universal moral obligation than this. It is purely ethical, *i.e.* it appeals directly and only to our sense of right, as the next one which we shall present appeals to our religious feelings. But it makes this ethical appeal in such a way as to present each act of life to conscience in such light of com-

parison that there can be no escape from a candid moral judgment. A man must lie to his own inmost soul before he can escape the moral accuracy of this rule; and such a lie is in the very constitution of his being impossible. He may deceive his own conscience, but not his consciousness. But this perfection of moral discrimination is equalled by the universality and facility of its application. It is a rule of duty, short and simple, always ready to hand, and yet, like a two-edged sword, it divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow.

To our Lord's second presentation of a universal moral law we have already called attention as the two great commandments. These two precepts our Lord does not announce as new. He is asked for "the great commandment in the law," a question frequently discussed among the scribes, and in reply He selects these two, one from Deuteronomy and the other from Leviticus, where their context gives them a very limited application, and does not in any sense constitute them precepts of universal and all-inclusive moral duty. But this our Lord clearly makes them when again He says, "On these two commandments hangeth the whole law and the prophets." He has given them a new and universal significance, and in this higher meaning they are not Mosaic, but Christian. Of the perfection of this law we have already spoken under the head of the Christian motive to duty.

Our Lord's third presentation of Christian duty is the Sermon on the Mount. Here we have the

most effective exhibition of moral ideals ever presented to the world. It is most effective in its power of awakening the consciences of men. Only in our own time are the men of the living world beginning to appreciate its high moral ideal, and to ask themselves, with a tinge of despair in their tone: "Is it possible to live up to it?" But it is no less effective in capacity of application to every conceivable relation in life. By happy aphorism and by concrete example it sets forth principles which cover the whole field of moral and religious duty. Of the depths of its spirituality as applying the law to the hearts, as well as the lives, of men, we need not speak again.

4. Following the example of his Master, St Paul has given us several exhibits of the most important elements and principles of Christian duty. The Epistles to the Romans, Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians are distinguished by the comprehensive ethical summary with which each is concluded. The twelfth chapter of Romans is a classic passage in this respect. But the Pauline passage which has impressed itself most deeply upon the heart of Christendom is the thirteenth of first Corinthians. In this hymn to charity he sets before us the supreme ethical and religious spirit of Christianity, and he exhibits it as the greatest of eternal things. It is not a new ethical ideal or spirit, for it is the very mind of Christ, as He talked and prayed at the last supper and on the way to Gethsemane, and as He hung upon the Cross. It is only the presentation which is

new, but in all literature we know not another such, in which the very soul of goodness is portrayed in such glorious form. It has fanned the flame of Divine charity in human hearts in all the Christian ages.

The Christian Moral Development.

In its regenerating work Christianity leads each individual through a progressive moral development up to what is called the "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." It begins with man as a fallen sinner, the natural man, the man who neither fears nor loves God, and who nevertheless may in his own way listen to the voice of conscience. It brings him first under the awakening of the Divine Spirit, into the fear of God, the second step in moral development. Here conscience is greatly strengthened by the aid of religious motive, although that motive is as yet but the lower form of religion. The first convictions of sin imply this awakening and strengthening of conscience, and as the spirit of conviction does its perfect work, searching the entire heart and life of the man, revealing to him at every step more fully his deficiency before God, the moral nature is called into the most active exercise until the man stands fully revealed to himself in the mirror of a clear and enlightened conscience. His conversion, his contrition, his confessions, all develop a greater moral strength and a clearer moral light. Every step in the

Christian experience implies not only religious but also moral development. When the man in whom this spirit of bondage and fear has done its perfect work next receives the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which he is made a new creature in Christ Jesus, a new, higher and stronger religious motive reinforces conscience. The man now loves God. And with this greater power of conscience comes a still larger enlightenment so that the child of God now walks in the light. This clearer, broader vision of all right in the light of love combined with the perfect peace and holy confidence of a purified conscience give our moral nature its true Christian manhood.

The Christian Spheres of Ethical Activity.

The spheres of moral relation and activity recognised in all systems of natural ethics are as follows: duties to myself, to my family, to my neighbour, to my country, and duties which countries owe each other.

These five are all recognised by Christianity; but it places beside the state the correlate spiritual field of the Church, and perfects the relations of nations in the broader view of humanity beside which it again places the Church universal, and finally centres all duties in God to whom all beings to whom we owe duty belong.

1. While the Christian life is essentially one of denial of self, yet our Lord's great commandments recognise duty to ourselves. "Thou shalt

love thy neighbour as thyself does not exclude or improperly sacrifice self. Among such duties to self recognised in the New Testament are those relating to the health and perfection of the body. As the temple of the Holy Ghost it is to be kept in temperance, chastity, and vigorous exercise and proper means used for the preservation of its health. The mind also is to be cultivated by the acquisition of all useful knowledge; and above all the moral and spiritual nature is to be cultured by communion with God, the study of His Word and growth in grace, and in knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The foundations of the family are laid in the natural relations of the sexes, and in the relation of parents to their children. These constitute the family at once a natural and a Divine institution, established by the Author of our being. This institution lays the foundation of all human development and is the supremely important element in human life. If it fails all true moral perfection of life becomes impossible, and religion falls with morality. Sin against family life is thus the most heinous of all sins.

The moral foundations of family life are laid—

(*a*) In the obligation of every man and woman to whom God has given the ability, to enter into this relation. The exceptions recognised are the call of some higher duty to humanity.

(*b*) In the right of every man to choose the mother of his children and the companion of his life.

(*c*) In the equally sacred right of every woman to choose the father of her children and the life companion of her home. Upon the exercise of these rights and the resulting covenant for life made between a man and a woman in the early maturity of their life the whole superstructure of their family life is to be built, and Christianity recognises such an act as religious, and made sacredly inviolable by Divine sanction. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

(*d*) With the birth of a child appears a new personality, and a new right, the right of the children to the full care and affection of both father and mother.

These rights imply the sacred unity and perpetuity of the family relation. They mutually limit and qualify each other, and can be united and harmonised and perfectly fulfilled only in an institution which excludes adultery, polygamy, and divorce, and is a sacredly inviolable lifelong relation, dissolved only by death, unless broken by the most heinous sin. Christianity stands unique in the high standard which it presents on this point, as well as in its solemn religious enforcement.

The large space given to the duties of the family in the Epistles shows the Christian estimate of the importance of the relation. These duties include—

(*a*) Mutual affection, patience and forbearance between husband and wife, parents and children, and brothers and sisters.

(*b*) Wise government, and cheerful obedience maintaining proper order in the family.

(*c*) Mutual provision, help and support.

(*d*) The proper education of the children, and their settlement in life.

The results of the truly Christian home are—

(*a*) The highest efficiency of the home as the training school of humanity and the foundation of both Church and State.

(*b*) The elevation of the position and the entire life and nature of woman, developing the highest virtues of the wife and mother.

(*c*) The growth in the home of all the most beautiful social virtues and affections.

(*d*) The perfection of the æsthetic as well as the social, ethical, and religious life.

(*e*) The maintenance of social purity.

(*f*) The strength, stability and progress of human society.

3. As human society existed in the New Testament times, family life included much more than the relations which we have just considered. Almost the entire industrial life of humanity was included in the family. In the social order of our time, tending more and more to the perfect equality of humanity, a principle to which Christianity has most powerfully contributed, these relations of master and servant, or as to-day employer and employed, have largely passed over into the sphere of general social relations. The moral qualities demanded by these relations are

strongly enforced by Christianity. The master must remember that he too is a servant of Christ, and the servant that his work is judged by God as well as man; and both that they are brethren in Christ Jesus. The virtues of truth, honour, justice, kindness, equity, fidelity, honesty, industry, help for the needy, and respect for age and authority, are not only enforced as moral obligations, but have all the sanctions of religion.

4. The State. The outcome of our modern Christianity is the independence of both Church and State each in its own sphere. This seems to be the legitimate outcome of the teachings of the New Testament. At the date of the origin of Christianity the civil power was supreme and claimed absolute jurisdiction in religion as in all other matters. The teaching of the Apostles was active obedience in all matters of law, order, and justice, passive obedience in suffering wrong for conscience' sake. But this passive obedience was in itself a protest against the encroachment of the State into the domain of conscience, faith and worship. But even in this relation Christianity was the ally of the State in the maintenance of all order, justice, industry, intelligence and civil virtue. But Christianity wrought from within, perfecting the individual. The State wrought from without, organising society under law. The organisation of the State becomes more perfect as its individual elements are perfected, *i.e.* as men one by one are made better. In its work of saving men, that is rescuing them from sin, and

in the exercise of individual conscience in faith and worship Christianity claims liberty and thereby vindicates the dignity of man and asserts his inalienable rights. It may even oppose the State if the State attempts to force conscience by making laws which sanction or encourage moral wrong. Otherwise the State must claim liberty as well as the Church. The delimitation of their several spheres at times raises questions of the greatest delicacy in our complicated modern society. Wherever there is doubt as to the jurisdiction which should be supreme, the principle of the New Testament seems to indicate that the Church should make way for the civil power, leaving the final manifestation of right to God.

5. The Church. The relation of the individual Christian to the Church opens up a distinct and in most respects a new field of duty. The Church is a Divine institution organised, first, for the perfecting of believers; second, for the salvation of the world. Under this organisation each man has responsibility, first, for the use of all means and diligence for the perfection of his own Christian character; second, for all possible helpfulness in the building up of his fellow-Christians; third, for all possible effort both individual and collective for the world's salvation. The duties which arise under these categories are not only unique but often opposed to the ethical maxims of the world. The man of the world, while acknowledging the high ethical character of the spirit of co-operation and helpfulness in the outer

things of life, will often resist as impertinent any intermeddling with his personal inner life. And this sentiment is not without its foundation in right reason. The principle of individual responsibility demands that there shall not be undue interference with individual judgment and conscience. In fact moral and religious changes brought about by mere personal influence or pertinacity are no longer ethical but merely social in their motive. The only conversion of value is that which takes place by the power of the truth and the Divine Spirit in the conscience. The perfect work of the Church is that which conceals self and presents truth. In no relation of duty are the supreme moral qualities more necessary than in this field. Love, zeal, courage, combined with humility, self-effacement, and utter disinterestedness, these are the qualities which must govern in the work, and which were conspicuous in the Master Himself.

From the Church the field of duty leads easily out to the whole brotherhood of humanity and to its regenerated future. The Christian grasps the world as a unity, the family of one Father God, the common brotherhood of man. He sets before him an ideal of the ultimate possibilities of that unity such as can be found in no other system. This is the inspiration and the guide of all his effort, the goal of his hopes and work. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

International relations. The spirit of Christi-

anity may be fully applied here as in the individual sphere. This is evident.

1. Supreme justice must rule between nations.

2. The golden rule may be applied in international matters.

3. The beneficent spirit of Christianity is not without its application.

In closing this subject we may add a single note on the ethics of the Old Testament. The ethical truth of the Old Dispensation, of course, passes over into the New. Christ came not "to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil." But this very fulfilment, enlarging and giving new and higher significance as well as an entirely new spirit, most frequently made even the old form of precept insufficient. The new wine must be put into new bottles. The spirit and truth of even the least of the old commandments is not to be broken. But duty is no longer confined to their letter; "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." In fact the Scribes and Pharisees had by their literalism and their self-righteous spirit, "by the letter and circumcision," become "transgressors of the law" in its true inward spiritual meaning. Our Lord does not give us a new form for each of the ten commandments, but takes as illustrations the third, sixth, and seventh, so resetting them as He in another place does the great commandments, that the narrowness of the old letter is completely broken, and the fulness

and freedom of the new spirit is given free course. The angry temper is murder, the lustful look adultery, the very use of an oath of any kind a weakening of moral truth in its deepest spirit of honest simple transparency and love of the truth, and of the reverential spirit which always feels the presence of God. The old letter completely failed through the devices of the sinful flesh to avoid its narrow literal demand. But the penetrating truth of the new word cannot be so avoided. The old mount was a mount that burned with fire, the new mount is a mount of beatitudes, and its living spirit is the spirit of love which fulfils all law.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

To the combined religious and ethical life thus presented by Christianity under these three fundamental aspects of righteousness, sonship, and holiness, and developed in the ethical principles just described, there is ascribed in the New Testament a perfection. This is intimated by our Lord Himself in His two great fundamental discourses. Both Matthew and Luke follow the Sermon on the Mount, in which the deepest ethical principles of Christianity are expounded with our Lord's injunction, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," and, "Every one when he is perfected shall be as his Master." St John, in his account of our Lord's intercessory prayer, presents the perfection of His followers as the very burden of Christ's supplication—"I in them, and thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them even as Thou lovedst Me."

This teaching of the Master is followed up by all the leading Apostolic writers of the New Testament, Peter, Paul, James, and John, and the

writer to the Hebrews, all setting forth perfection as the goal of the Christian life in such passages as 1 Peter v. 10, Rom. xii. 2, Eph. iv. 13, Heb. xiii. 21, James i. 4, 1 John iv. 17, and many others. These passages prove clearly that a moral and religious perfection of life and character was an idea familiar both to Christ and His Apostles, and entered fully into their ethical conception of the spiritual life. This does not imply the metaphysical subtleties or narrow definitions of later theologies. But it does imply that a certain full measure of Christian life and character was set forth as "the perfect man," "the measure of the fulness of Christ."

1. As to the nature of this perfection, it is a common term applied to the various aspects both of the religious life as we have already studied it under the blessings of salvation, and also of the outward life which flows from that inner life. Under each aspect of salvation, as righteousness, sonship, and sanctification, the third element, *i.e.* the new heart and life, alone is susceptible of those degrees of development which are implied in a doctrine of perfection. Neither God's act of grace nor the new relation in which it instates us can be less than perfect. When God justifies, it is a perfect forgiveness of all our sins, but the righteous character of finite and imperfect humanity, and still more the righteous life, may still need to be established and perfected. So when we are adopted into the family of God, both God's act of love and our new relation are

perfect; but the regenerate nature and the new life of love may still need perfection. So again, when we are called as the holy people, both God's call and our relation and obligation are all-comprehensive and in themselves perfect. They include all that we can give to the Divine service. But the practical working out of these obligations in all holiness of life may be far from perfect. The doctrine of perfection applies, therefore, to religion as affecting, first, the renewed character, second, the new moral life. In each of these we have— Perfections.

1. Righteousness or purity (of heart and life). For this the Gospel—

(*a*) Makes provision. Christ "gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works." So again, "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

(*b*) Gives command. We are called to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." And every one having in him the hope of the Gospel "purifieth himself even as he is pure." We are to "mortify our members which are upon the earth," and to "put on as the elect of God, holy

and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering," etc.

(*c*) Gives examples directly or indirectly, as is done by Paul and John.

Note that this purity is set forth as in the conscience, the affections, and the will, and is connected with the full assurance of faith in Heb. x. 22, and with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, Rom. viii. 2.

2. Perfect love. This is the perfected spirit of sonship. Its most complete exhibition is found in 1 Cor. xiii. 1—xiv. 1, and 1 John iii. 1—v. 5, where it is especially united with perfect righteousness or freedom from sin. Other passages setting it forth are Phil. i. 9-11, Col. iii. 12-17. In its practical aspect it is illustrated in Acts iv. 31-35. As a rich inward experience, Eph. iii. 14-19. In both associated with the work of the Holy Spirit see also Rom. v. 5, viii. 14; Gal. iv. 6; Acts vii. 55; John iii. 5. In 1 Thess. iii. 12-13 it is associated with perfect holiness.

3. The perfection of holiness. This includes the full consecration or setting apart to the service of God of all our powers, both in the inner intent and motive of the heart (devotion), and in the outward activity and service of the life. This is specifically the subject of Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. v. 23-24.

It is frequently confused in modern thought with the first aspect of Christian perfection, viz. purity, but in the New Testament, following the

ritual of the Old, they are indeed associated, but yet clearly distinguished. That which was set apart for God must be first purified and then anointed with the consecrating oil. Both are embraced in Titus ii. 11-14. The perfect holiness embraces (1) the full-orbed ideal of the duties and obligations of God's service, and of our calling and election to the same. (2) The holy anointing of the Divine Spirit. (3) The consecrated will including all the active powers of our nature. (4) The perfect service.

The ideal of the holy people is to be found in Christ Himself. He is the Elect Servant and the Head of the Church. Hence "unity with Christ," the "mind of Christ," and "growing up into Christ" are the terms in which this ideal is set before us, and its perfection is expressed by St John in these words: "As He is so are we in this world."

It is scarcely necessary to repeat what we have already traversed as to the calling, the anointing, the privileges and the duties of the elect or holy people. Suffice it to say that as in full assurance justification is carried up to its perfection, and as in perfect love sonship or adoption is carried up into perfection, so in entire sanctification the calling and election are made sure and carried up to their perfection. Probably no other aspect of the perfected Christianity is carried more fully into detail in the New Testament than this. It occupies a large part of the hortatory portion of every epistle; and naturally so as the epistles

were addressed to the collective body of the saints. As examples we may turn to Heb. iii. 1-14. At the end of Paul's wonderful discussion of the New Testament doctrine of the elect people read Rom. xii. 1, etc. After his beautiful picture of the members of Christ's body in 1 Cor. xii., read ch. xiii., or in 2 Cor. ch. vi. 14, vii. 1. Or after the expanded presentation of the glories of the elect, Eph. i. and ii., read the wonderful prayer in ch. iii. and the exhortations of chs. iv.-vi.

Summing up this New Testament teaching as to Christian perfection we note—

1. That it is not set before us as an absolute perfection either negative (*i.e.* absolute sinlessness), or positive (*i.e.* an immutable or fixed limit of spiritual attainment).

2. That it is the maturity, the full normal development of spiritual grace in humanity.

3. That hence it is the highest moral exercise of the holy will as founded in pure conscience, holy affections, and the full scriptural ideal of our calling.

4. That it is a practical life of all righteousness, all graces, and all service according to this holy will.

5. That it grows out of the primary experience of the Christian religion the gift of the Holy Ghost, and may be regarded as a growth to the plenitude of that experience, but that it may proceed from a repetition of that experience in larger measure whereby—

(*a*) The Atonement is applied to the conscience in its full power, 1 John i. 7.

(*b*) The perfect love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, 1 John iv. 17-18.

(*c*) The perfect sanctifying truth illuminates the understanding, John xvii. 17, and the perfect anointing guides into all truth, John xvi. 13; 1 John ii. 27.

(*d*) Thus the whole Christian man rises to the Divine ideal set before us by the life of the Master, and set forth in His own words in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v., vi., vii.

The Attainment and Life of Christian Perfection.

First of all, there is a more advanced, a full experience, Rom. xii. 2, where the word "prove," δοκιμαζειν, points to the testing of a personal experience, and the will of God which is thus proved is the will of God concerning us in Christ Jesus, 1 Thess. v. 18, which Paul himself had experienced, Acts xxii. 14, and the fulness of which he asks for the Church, Col. i. 9, and which he now exhorts the Roman Church to prove as "good, excellent, and *perfect*."

This experience, however, is not generically different from the primary Christian experience. If that is the purification of conscience, so that henceforth it governs the life in righteousness, this is the perfect cleansing and the pure intention of right. It is a cleansing from all unrighteousness, the testimony of conscience that "in holiness and sincerity of God we behave ourselves in the world, and it is being "sincere and void of

offence unto the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. If that is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, this is "perfect love." If that is holiness, consecration to the service of God, this is "perfect" holiness. If that is the gift of the Holy Ghost, this is being "filled with the Spirit."

But how is this higher, fuller, perfect experience to be reached? What is the way of its attainment? We note that St Paul in his exhortations to the churches, pressing them on to this perfection of Christianity, sets before them both the law of Christian life and also the promises of the Gospel. In writing to the Ephesians he sets forth the promise, ch. iii. 14-21, and then in chs. iv., v., vi. he expands the full line of Christian duty. In writing to the Galatians, promise, precept, and warning are mingled throughout. So in Corinthians, Romans, Colossians, Philippians, and Thessalonians. Note that the promises often take the forms of prayers.

This Apostolic method shows us clearly that for the attainment of Christian perfection there must be—

1. A full knowledge of God's will. Hence they are called to "prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God," and are sanctified in or by "the truth."

2. A deep searching of heart bringing to light all the elements of moral defect both in heart and life. "If we say we have no sin we deceive our-

selves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

3. The enlarged consecration which comes from more perfect knowledge of ourselves and of our duty. With the higher promises and responsibilities of the Gospel before us, we are commanded to "cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

4. The larger faith which apprehends the fulness of the Gospel promise. Here, as at the beginning, we are "saved by grace through faith." But the promise is now such an one as inspired Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians, "The God of Peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it."

5. The fulness of the power of the Holy Spirit. So again Paul prays for the Roman Church, that "The God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope in the power of the Holy Ghost." Of such fulness of power we have many examples in the Acts of the Apostles, where it is said again and yet again, that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," and as a result new strength for labour, and new power in ministry, and new grace for dying, testimony are manifestly given.

Corresponding to these scriptural landmarks has been the teaching and experience of the most eminent saints in the history of the Church. To this we have the witness of Augustine in his "Confessions," of Kempis in "The Imitation of Christ," of Taylor, Law, Fletcher, and Wesley in their writings on Christian Perfection, and of Barclay in his "Apology," and of the Westminster Assembly of Puritan Divines in their "Confession of Faith." In the fifth century, in the middle ages of the Western Church, in the great Puritan Movement and in both High Anglicanism and Methodism, the experience of the Church has been one on this point; and as in the Apostolic age, so in each of these ages, and may we not say in all the Christian ages, men have been consciously purified in the spirit of their minds by the manifestation of the truth through the power of the Spirit.

Precise definitions as to the extent of the effects of this work of grace and as to the best designation by which to describe it have led to differences of opinion, and even to violent controversy. But in all ages, and among all who possess the truth of the Divine life, the highest and best living faith of the Church has grasped something of this glorious "measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Its clearer apprehension, and its more universal enjoyment will presage the full coming in of our Lord's Kingdom and prove the moral power for the conquest of the world.

Excursus on the Life and Practice of Christian Perfection.

The right conscience and the perfect love become the holy motive of a consecrated will. This will is not compelled. It is still within the moral limits of probation, *i.e.* it must work, it must strive, it must exercise itself to all godliness, otherwise it may still fail and fall away. If this were not so, Christian perfection would end probation, and the life of perfect holiness would move forward automatically. The new experience places the moral nature in its right relation to all the motive principles of our nature, but leaves us still subject to probation, hence requiring to watch and pray and able to maintain the perfect ascendency of conscience and love over all lower desires only by the exercise of will. The desires indeed no longer fight as before, but the firm hand of consecrated will must be kept on them, otherwise they may again become inordinate. There are, moreover, physical and intellectual limitations, some of them arising directly from our sins, from which deliverance comes not in this life. Brain and muscle, memory and power of prolonged consecutive thought may all be less than they might have been but for our sins and those of our ancestors. The perfect regeneration comes only with the resurrection morning. To understand the bearing of these facts upon the practical life of even the most perfect type of the Christian here we must pay some attention

to the psychological analysis of our active and motive nature.

There are three distinct elements which may act as motives on the basis of which will may be exercised.

1. The appetites, desires, and affections which connect us with the world around us whether material or spiritual. These are always moved from without us, and by the agency of the senses or memory of that which comes through the senses.

2. The higher religious affections which unite us to God above us, and arise through faith by the power of the Holy Spirit.

3. Conscience, which sits within as the arbiter of all motives judging of them as right or wrong, and which becomes itself a motive power by the force of its imperative "I ought" or "I ought not." We have already seen that regenerating power is applied (1) to the conscience. By the Divine act of forgiveness as applied by the Holy Spirit, the conscience is first purified, then quickened and strengthened. Its power to give the right direction to life is restored. (2) To the religious affections. They are created anew within us. Love is followed by the complete fruits of the Spirit.

But we are now called to consider a fourth element of our nature, the will. This is the man acting. It is the deepest self. It is the centre in which all else meet. It is the putting forth of our power which is our measure of being. Now,

regenerating grace in the third place reaches our will. It puts the will under the direction of conscience on the basis of the religious motive, *i.e.* love to God and to man as God's child. The will is consecrated. The whole man feels himself to be the servant of the living God.

In this way the centre of personality, the man putting forth his power of being, is transferred from the lower to the higher being, from the sensuous to the spiritual nature. The flesh no longer rules, but the spirit.

But the flesh still strives, rebels, and is not subject to the law of God. But its power is broken, and it is now controlled by the new will directed by conscience and animated by the love of God. And as the work of grace is perfected the perfect control becomes easy, the will grows strong in spirit. The passions still exist, and still must be governed, but now that the centre of life, the interest and energy of our being, is transferred from them, they lose the abnormal strength which they once possessed, and fall back to the position for which God made them, the servants of the Spirit. But they must ever be governed as servants, otherwise they may again seek to be masters. Even in this service, like the body itself with which many of them are intimately connected, they are not perfect servants. They may carry to the end the weakness which the service of sin has impressed upon them. In the resurrection morning the creature itself, *i.e.* the material nature, shall be delivered from the

bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. On the other hand, through the will and through what may be called the co-ordination of the affections, these lower affections are themselves refined, purified, and made meet for the higher service upon which they now enter. The social affections especially are purified and elevated by the quickening power of religion, and in the perfected Christian character their renewed action becomes of the highest importance. Many of the fruits of the Spirit are the renewed social affections, and one of them, temperance, pervades the whole field of the appetites themselves. The same principles apply to the influence of religion in the intellectual nature. The memory, the imagination, and the power of reasoning may carry to the grave the results of the weakening which has resulted from sin, and may not again be perfect servants of the Spirit until the perfect regeneration of the resurrection morning. But even these are wonderfully quickened and strengthened in all their higher and better action by the new power of spiritual life. This quickening extends to logical continuity of thought, to intuitive penetration, and to æsthetic sense as well.

Even the body itself, freed from vicious passions and appetites, and stimulated by the serene peace and joy of the new life, is strengthened by the change, although its full promise lies beyond. It thus appears that Christian perfection is the redemption of the entire manhood, its restoration

at least in a measure to the best that it is now possible for us to reach in this human and brief probation. It is a promise indeed of the life that now is, all that is best and noblest in it; but it is a still more abundant promise for a life to come. Even in this life—

1. It makes man master of himself by bringing will and conscience into rule of the whole inner as well as outer life. Until that takes place man is a slave; now in Christ he becomes truly free. The automatic rule of the passions is bondage. The calm, self-centred rule of conscience deciding and doing the right is alone worthy of man.

2. It lifts this freed man to the plane of the Divine. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

3. From this central force it works out a higher perfection for every subordinate element of our nature. Intellect is quickened, taste is refined, judgment is made clear, imagination is purified, memory is strengthened, affections are given a nobler action, appetites are moderated to their true ends, and even the body itself attains a higher perfection and a more perfect beauty. What shall it be when we shall be like Him, beholding Him as He is?

DIVISION VII
THE OFFICE AND AGENCIES OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH

THE culmination of the blessings of salvation is as we have seen the union of the saved believer with the chosen people of God. This is first of all an inward and spiritual union, a union known to God and recorded in Heaven, a unity of one faith, one Lord, and one God, and Father over all. The object of this unity as we have seen is the fulfilment of the eternal purpose of God for the world's salvation by Christ Jesus.

But this very purpose requires an external and organised unity as well as the unity of the Spirit. Hence our Lord in teaching the things of the kingdom not only sets forth its great spiritual principles in the form of parables, but takes it for granted that His disciples will assemble, as did the people of God under the old dispensation; and He lays the foundation of their organic work by choosing apostles and evangelists whom He sends forth to preach His Gospel. He also organises sacramental rites to be perpetuated in

the new church as had been circumcision and the passover in the old; and finally commissions His apostles not to rule the church thus organised, but to preach the Gospel, and to admit all believers into the Church by baptism, and to teach them fully the truth which He had given them; for this purpose giving them the promise of the Holy Spirit. This church thus outlined in its most essential elements by our Lord Himself, was fully developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit from the day of Pentecost onward.

The Church was in this way naturally and historically established, before the world as the visible embodiment of the new Christian faith, first at Jerusalem, then throughout Palestine, in the Syrian city of Antioch reaching the Gentile world and receiving the name Christian.

Historically then the Church was founded—

1. In the example of the ancient assemblies of God's people in temple and synagogue.

2. In the establishment of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

3. In the appointment of the twelve apostles.

These were the outward and preparatory steps.

4. The inward principles of the Church were embodied in our Lord's teaching as to the nature and work of His Kingdom.

5. The practical act of foundation took place on the day of Pentecost. The assembly, the baptism of the Spirit, the preaching of the Gospel, the conversion of three thousand, and their admission as disciples by baptism, these were the

first practical measures of a living church, embracing the most essential elements of its work and function in the world; and from that day forward the visible church of Christ was known amongst men.

The Church as thus practically commenced was from the beginning—

1. An assembly of the disciples of Christ; (*a*) for united prayer, according to the emergencies of their lives. When Peter and John were let go after their first arraignment before the Sanhedrim, they betook themselves to this assembly, "and when they had prayed the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness; (*b*) for mutual edification and the communion of the Lord's Supper, "They continued steadfast in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."

2. An organisation for mutual assistance distributing to the necessities of the poor, and for the preaching of the Gospel in the world. At the beginning the Apostles themselves seem to have directed this work in both its branches, and thus to have formed not only the authority by which it was directed, but more conspicuously the centre of activity around which it gathered. The Apostles led in the preaching of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church, and the gifts of the Church were laid at their feet.

But in a very short time even the direction of this work became too burdensome for them, and as a result confusion arose. The force of circumstances thus gave rise to the first step in the extension of Church organisation beyond the original arrangements of Christ Himself. The seven deacons were appointed for the daily ministration, while the Apostles continued "steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the Word." These were appointed for their Christian character, they were men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom. They were selected by the multitude of the disciples, and solemnly appointed by the Apostles with the laying on of hands.

Presently with the rapid increase of the disciples we find these deacons also taking part in the ministry of the Word. Stephen full of grace and power became a most conspicuous figure in the propagation of the new doctrine; and after his martyrdom Philip appears prominent in evangelistic labours, establishing the Church in Samaria. In fact the record implies that large numbers of the original church at Jerusalem now scattered abroad by persecution were engaged in evangelistic work. At the same time it is evident that the oversight of this work remained in the Apostles' hands who for this purpose continued at Jerusalem. Presently we find the *Church* at Jerusalem exercising this supervision, and sending forth Barnabas who with Saul seems to complete the establishment of the new Christian Church at Antioch as Peter and John had done with that of Samaria.

In the meantime prophets and teachers had taken their place as workers in the Church. In what way they were introduced we know not, nor how their office and work was recognised. Later on Paul informs us that the qualifications by which they discharged their duties were the special gift of the Holy Spirit. In a similar way we first meet with elders, far out in the churches of Galatia, who it would seem were appointed by the voice of the Church and the laying on of the hands of Paul now the apostle to the Gentiles. But before this it would seem there were elders in the church at Jerusalem appointed we know not when or how. Finally we find these elders spoken of as overseers or bishops and as pastors or shepherds of the flock. These fragmentary notes represent our recorded information as to the beginnings of organisation in the Apostolic Church. They serve at least to show very clearly that it was no cast-iron system prescribed by authority and imposed by command, but a natural growth, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, taking its outward shape from the examples at hand or the measures indicated by the growing wants and work of the Church as understood by sanctified common sense, and that in its institution the judgment and voice of the people and the authoritative oversight of the Apostles were harmoniously united.

In the church thus established as a living historic institution, some other things are worthy to be noted.

1. The bond of unity between its various branches.

2. Its mode of settlement of questions of the faith.

3. Its exercise of discipline.

4. Its perpetuation of the ministry.

5. Its method of extending its operations into new fields.

The Church of the living God as in general is certainly referred to by Paul as "the house of God" and "the pillar and ground of the truth"; but it may be questioned whether this or any other passage in the New Testament implies an outward organic unity. The spiritual unity of the Church as the body of Christ is on the other hand clearly and fully set forth in such passages as the fourth of Ephesians. "It is one body and one spirit even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling. It is to be preserved by meekness, long-suffering and love; and its essential elements are one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all and in all."

But while the spiritual unity in faith and love is thus emphasized, there are not wanting indications of an outward unity manifest in two ways; first in apostolic oversight and authority; and again in respect for the mother church at Jerusalem. It does not appear, however, that in the Apostolic age there was any attempt to exercise such authority, in any other way than by purely spiritual influences; and there is no example in

the Apostolic age of either the Apostles or the mother churches attempting to exercise discipline other than that of earnest presentation of the truth.

The two examples which we have of this are the reference of the church at Antioch to the Mother Church, including the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem, and St Paul's dealing with the churches in Galatia, the fruits of his first missionary journey. The question in both these cases was the same, not of spiritual decline or immorality of life, but of the true doctrine of Christianity; and the authority employed is the setting forth of the truth. There is not even an implicit threat of refusal to acknowledge them as churches of Christ; on the contrary, Paul does so acknowledge them in express terms. Christian truth must be maintained by the conviction of faith, by the truth and the Spirit, and not by anathemas. Paul's only anathema is for those who love not the Lord as shown in a wicked life.

We have in the New Testament more than one instance of the exercise of the discipline of exclusion from individual churches, but in each case for unholy life. Such were Hymenæus and Philetus who made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, and the incestuous man at Corinth. The responsibility of this discipline is clearly placed upon those to whom is committed the care of the churches, and in each of these cases it is exercised by Paul himself. The perpetuation of the ministry was another

essential element of the work of the Apostolic Church. Writing to Timothy, Paul says, "The things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." So to Titus he gives direction to appoint elders in every city as a part of the necessary order of the Church. This had already been a matter of verbal instruction, and was, as we see from Acts xiv. 23, Paul's own custom. An elder was to be blameless in life, free from violent passion and covetousness, filled with the Christian spirit of love, a just man as becometh all rulers and "sound" in doctrine, with ability both to teach and to maintain the truth. The emphasis is here again laid on thoroughly spiritual elements, and not upon any outward form.

We have in the New Testament one marked example of the Church's entrance upon a new field of work under our Lord's great commission. The record is in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts. It was out of a time of special spiritual quickening in the Church that this new work took its beginning. The prophets and teachers, they were probably both, were earnestly engaged in the ministry of teaching in the church at Antioch, and at the same time devoting themselves to fasting and prayer, when a conviction from the Spirit of God fastened on their minds. "Separate me, Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them." This would appear to indicate that they themselves had

already received a call to the missionary work. This call was now confirmed by a Divine conviction felt by the Church. Immediately that conviction is put into action, and the whole Church solemnly sets them apart and sends them forth to this new work. This example is especially valuable as showing how free, how natural, how providential, and yet how spiritual and how divinely directed were these movements of the Apostolic Church.

From those aspects of the Church as an organised body, working and visible in the world, with its many branches scattered everywhere, we turn to the broader view of the Church as a living ideal unity in Christ, on earth yet heavenly and spiritual in its attributes. From the early ages there have been assigned to the Church viewed thus in its ideal unity the seven notes or attributes. It is One, Apostolic, Catholic, Invisible, Holy, Indefectible, and Glorious. These attributes are founded in the truth as apprehended by religious faith; they are expressed in Scripture, not collectively in a single statement, but at various times and places, but they belong in their truth and perfection not to any individual church, but to the ideal Church as seen by God, and as it will be revealed in millennial glory.

Church of Christ is One

The Church of Christ, as we have already seen, is ONE, not as an immense worldly, political or ecclesiastical organism, but in spirit, in faith, in service of the common Lord, and in worship of the common Father, but still more especially in

the love and peace of common work together for God. That any living branch of the Church is still sadly short of this ideal is only too evident.

That it has scarcely been realised in practice since the early Apostolic age is also evident. And yet in the deeper spirit, it is true in every age, and never more so than to-day, blind and imperfect as we are, every true believer feels something of this unity of the Spirit, and longs for its more perfect expression in some form in the outer life of the whole Church of God. It may perhaps only be perfectly realised in our own hearts when we recognise that there are many members in one body, and diversities of operation of the same Spirit.

The Church of Christ is Apostolic. It is "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets," *i.e.* of their divinely inspired teaching, "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." But this very passage which so clearly and directly asserts this attribute of Apostolicity, itself recognises more than one building so founded. Even in Paul's day there were the churches of the Gentiles founded on his teaching of the Gospel of the uncircumcision, and the churches of the circumcision founded on the preaching of Peter. Paul's supreme effort was to prevent these forms from dividing Christ and His cause. But he gave the right hand of fellowship to Peter to go to the Hebrews, and accepted the same that he and Barnabas should go to the Gentiles, and rejoiced if in either way

Christ was preached. The Apostolic foundation was the Apostolic doctrine, life, and spirit, fully expressed by no one of the twelve, but transmitted to the Church as a heritage from them all, each according to his measure of the gift of God. Its perfection will be the light of the interpreting spirit which will come upon the Church in the millennial morning.

Catholic — The Church of Christ is CATHOLIC. It is the common spiritual fellowship of the whole body, embracing all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. It reconciles all differences in Christ, He makes "of the twain one new man, so making peace." It is the Spirit which says, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness. It ignores unimportant distinctions; neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." And it says from the heart, "As many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Invisible — This church is invisible to the eye of flesh and visible only in heaven. So the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "Ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched," an outward and palpable body, something to be recognised by the outward senses. "But ye are come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven." This passage in itself

gives us the clearest ideal of this church as it stands before the eye of God.

This church is HOLY. It is "a holy nation." And yet each individual member still needs the exhortation "to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul"; and, "As he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves holy in all manner of living."

It is INDEFECTIBLE. Christ's promise is that "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." Each individual member may fall or be deceived, they may "stumble at the word being disobedient." The false prophets "shall lead many astray," and deceive, "if possible, even the elect"; but the remnant shall endure to the end and be saved for God's purpose.

It is a GLORIOUS church. Such it is in the love of Christ who loved the Church and gave Himself up for it that He might sanctify it, "having cleansed it by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present the Church unto Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." The glory of the Church like the glory of God is the glory of holiness.

It will be seen that the church as thus viewed is not material, or outward and formal; it is the church as viewed by God in its inner spirit and life, the church which is now only growing into God's holy temple, but which will yet be revealed in all its Divine perfections. This church is as

yet a vision of faith ; but even now its foundations are perfectly laid in Christ, and its walls are slowly rising, and one day each stone will be polished for the palace of the King, and our highest and holiest ideal of her beauty will be far surpassed by the completed work of the Master Builder.

The Visible Church.

The Church existing before God in its catholic or universal form, becomes the visible Church in each particular age and place as "a congregation of believing men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments are duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

According to the definition of this article, which would probably be generally accepted by Protestants, the outward and visible Church includes—

1. An assembly, congregation, or visibly united body of believers.

2. The preaching of the Word of God.

3. The administration of the Sacraments according to Christ's ordinance in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same. Wherever these are found there is the Church. The Church is essentially the congregation of believers, and its necessary accompaniments the ministry of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments.

Historically we have already found—

1. That such a church is founded by the preaching of the Gospel through which men become believers, and are called into the fellowship of the Church.

2. That its individual members were admitted by baptism.

3. That the whole Church is built up, as also each of its members, by pastoral care and instruction.

4. That the Lord's Supper and the assembling for Christian fellowship and prayer are the tokens of continuous membership.

5. That the Church, as thus constituted, becomes God's instrument for the world's salvation. From each church as a centre, and by its ministry as a church, the Gospel is to be spread abroad to the regions beyond. For this ministry of salvation the whole Church is responsible; but, as we have seen, for its fulfilment in the varied labours required, God endows and calls individual men, who thus constitute a separate ministry. They are at once, with the whole Church, ministers of Christ for His work, and yet ministers and messengers of the churches set apart at the call of God.

CHAPTER II

THE MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH

THE Apostles, chosen and appointed by Christ Himself and taught by Him for their work, were the beginning both of the Church and the ministry. They, with a few others faithful to the teaching of the Master as His disciples, who believed on Him and at Pentecost were endowed with His Spirit, constituted the living Church. To this whole Church the ministry of the Gospel for the world's salvation was committed as the result of their calling in Christ. This universal ministry, calling, election and responsibility soon became an important element of the religious faith of both Jewish and Gentile churches. It was, as we have seen, a most important aspect of their salvation in Christ Jesus. At the same time the special call given by Christ to the twelve was from the beginning recognised, not only by their converts from Pentecost onward, but also by the few who were associated with them as followers of the Lord and partakers of the first baptism of the Holy Ghost, and who do not seem to have been admitted on profession of their faith by baptism with water.

These twelve for a time fulfilled every office of

the ministry in the Church, though there is no proof of their monopoly of any single function, whether of preaching, teaching, or baptising. As we may judge from the first chapter of Acts, they felt themselves specially charged with the responsibility of being "witnesses" (for Christ) of His resurrection, and for this purpose out "of the men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that He was received up from us," Joseph and Matthias were selected as qualified to succeed Judas. Of these as apostles we never hear by name again, but Paul and Barnabas are clearly recognised as apostles to the Gentiles, and Paul grounds his claim to apostleship not only on his having seen the Lord Jesus, but also upon his work in the Lord as the seal of his apostleship, and on this he claims the *freedom* in his work of an apostolic founder.

In this unique work as the original witnesses of the life, teaching, and resurrection of Christ, and the founders of the Church in doctrine, the Apostles could have no successors. No second generation could bear their original testimony, and no new foundations could be added to those laid by Christ and His Apostles. But from the beginning, the work of the Apostles embraced more than this. The preaching of the Word, the planting and building of new churches and their pastoral oversight, soon became a work for which twelve men were utterly insufficient, and for which,

as we have already seen, new and subordinate orders of the ministry were appointed, growing up with the growth of the Church, and appointed in ways which at once recognised the authority of the Apostles and the voice of the entire Church.

The special ministry thus grew to include after the Apostles who stood alone in their relation both to Christ and the Church:

1. Prophets associated with them in doctrine.

2. Teachers extending the knowledge of the truth revealed to the Apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

3. Evangelists engaged with the Apostles in planting the Church in the regions beyond.

4. Elders, bishops, or pastors for the care and supervision of the churches.

5. Deacons, assistants to the pastors, especially in the care of the sick and the poor.

With reference to this New Testament ministry thus historically created in the Apostolic age we may note:

1. That it is clearly recognised as a thing necessary to the Church's work, and hence is enjoined to be perpetuated. Paul especially lays this as a duty upon both Timothy and Titus.

2. That it is the gift of Christ to the Church through the Holy Spirit. He bestows the gifts and gives the call.

3. That in its outward appointment the voice, both of the existing ministry, whether apostles, the presbytery, or men specially charged with this

duty, as Timothy and Titus, is clearly recognised, as is also the judgment of the whole Church.

4. That no injunctions are given as to the form or orders of this ministry or its precise mode of institution or appointment, the whole emphasis resting upon its spiritual character and moral qualifications, and upon the responsible duties which it is called upon to perform. If we may judge from the history of its origin, it is a spiritual and not an outward and formal institution, free to adapt itself to the needs of its work as indicated by the Providence of God to the spiritual judgment of the Church in every time and place. This principle has practically enforced itself in spite of theories to the contrary. Names and forms have been rigidly retained, but the things themselves have taken shape from environment, as we believe God intended. At the same time a wise conservative spirit and respect for the example of antiquity is in accord with the spirit of Christianity. The relations of Christianity to Judaism, and the examples of Peter the conservative and Paul the man of new light and life, are full of instruction. Paul did not forget his reverence, and Peter bowed before the clearly manifested will of God.

CHAPTER III

THE MEANS OF GRACE

FROM the Church and the ministry as the working institutions of Christianity in her commission for the world's salvation, we turn naturally to the means to be employed for the accomplishment of her work. These are variously designated as means of grace, ordinances, and public services or ministry of the Church, two being specially distinguished as the Sacraments.

They are five in number.

1. The ministration of the Word, whether by preaching or teaching.
2. Prayer.
3. Baptism.
4. The Lord's Supper.
5. The fellowship of saints.

It is clear from the New Testament that the saving efficacy lies not in the outward forms or observance of these means, but in the truth which they present, and in the power of the Holy Spirit working through them. And yet each of these means is adapted to its end as cause to effect. They each appeal to our moral and religious nature, and are channels fitted by the God who made us to convey His grace.

The order of these means is that given above. By the Word of God the foundations of truth are laid, and the Spirit works conviction unto repentance. The penitent sinner seeks God in prayer, and again by the promises of the Word is led to faith. The believer is baptized, and so enters the fellowship of the Church and takes his place at the table of the Lord. Through the use of these means, grace is built up to its maturity or perfection.

We cannot say that God works apart from all means for the saving of men. Certainly in the order which He has given to His Church, the use of these means is necessary. On the other hand we would make a fundamental mistake if we claimed that any particular form of them was in every case essential to salvation. The New Testament seems only to affirm the necessity of the fundamental means, the Word. Men cannot believe in Him of whom they have not heard. God's truth in some form is necessary to faith, and faith to true prayer, and prayer to salvation. Upon these as foundations, the sacramental means are built, but there is no express statement that even baptism is necessary to salvation. It is indeed said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; but the negative is, "He that believeth not," or as the Revised Version has it, "he that 'disbelieveth,' shall be condemned." The whole doctrine which makes sacramental ordinances the foundation, and therefore in every case essential to salvation, is built upon the

notion that saving grace operates by occult processes, and not by moral, *i.e.* spiritual power; and unless we have mistaken the true meaning of the New Testament is opposed to its teaching.

The Ministry of the Word.

We have already considered the Word of God as the revelation of God to men, based upon the historic facts by which God is revealed, and interpreted by the Spirit of Inspiration, and forming a Divine message to men in the minds and from the lips of those whom God has chosen for that purpose. All portions of this Word prepare the way for, lead up to, centre around or follow from Christ, who is thus pre-eminently the Word of God, and the Truth. As in Paul, so in every believer, Christ must be revealed, or at least some measure of the truth which is in Him. To St John He is not only the "light of men," but "the true light which lighteth every man coming into the world." The reception of the truth as it is in Christ is the final test of all human probation.

This Word manifest in, as well as spoken by, our Lord Himself, was fully revealed in the Apostolic Church by the Holy Spirit; and its ministry as a spoken Word preceded by some years the Written Word of the New Testament. Into that Spoken Word the ancient Scriptures of the Old Covenant largely entered as leading to the Christ who was its central theme. The whole New Testament Scripture is the unfolding

to the Church and the world of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. But we have not here to consider the Word as the written record of Divine revelation, but rather as the instrument of the Spirit in its work in the hearts of men for their salvation. As such it is called the Sword of the Spirit, the Truth, the Gospel or good news of our salvation, and the Word of promise; and is the instrument of conviction, of faith, of regeneration, of sanctification, of comfort and of edification. As such it is to be preached, studied, taught and witnessed in and by the Church. First of all it is the duty of the Church and the ministry by careful and prayerful study to have this Word "richly in them in all wisdom," a living Word apprehended by faith in their own hearts.

Secondly, for this purpose to be diligent in the study and the teaching of the Word, both for themselves and for each other. Paul's admonitions to the churches and especially to Timothy are very instructive on this point.

Thirdly, to preach this Word to the whole world for the salvation of men. This is the great commission of the Apostles and of the whole Church.

Again to present this Word as the living testimony of saving, living faith. They are to be the witnesses of the truth of the Word in their own experience. In this way alone does it reach its full efficiency for the conviction and salvation of sinners. It is the "living and powerful Word," as it comes from the heart in which it works its

full results by the power of the Spirit. Hence to be filled with the Spirit is the supreme duty of the ministering church.

The office of the Word as a means of grace is well summarised by St Paul in 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching," the truth entering the understanding; "for reproof," the conviction of the conscience; "for correction," the change of life, conversion; "for instruction which is in righteousness," the practical life of the Christian; "that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely to every good work."

Prayer.

From the very foundations of the Christian Church prayer occupied a most prominent place. Before Pentecost the whole band of disciples "continued steadfastly in prayer" until the descent of the Spirit crowned their supplications. Immediately after, when persecution appeared, they betook themselves to prayer, and again were "all filled with the Holy Spirit." Our first account of the infant church after the baptism of the three thousand is that "they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers," implying that from the very first definite seasons of united prayer were observed in the Church. Shortly after, on the appointment of the deacons, we find the Apostles devoting themselves entirely to this

service and the ministry of the Word. But prayer not only constituted in itself a service of the Church, but it also entered as an element into all their religious services. It would appear from the beginning to have accompanied the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments; and it is repeatedly mentioned as used in the setting apart of men for the work of the ministry. At the same time we have frequent examples of its use as a separate service, especially in times when great needs or dangers pressed the Church or its members. Prayer also accompanied the working of such special miracles as the raising to life of Dorcas. Individual and secret prayer was also practised in the Church, at times accompanied by fasting, and is also specially marked by Divine approval and answers. At his conversion Paul waited in prayer for the light which was to lead him to the full possession of the Spirit of Christ. Cornelius through prayer was led into the full light of the gospel salvation. To Peter observing the customary hour of private prayer was given the commission to open the door of the church to the Gentiles. In the Acts of the Apostles we have many other examples of the use of this means of grace in the Apostolic Church. In answer to prayer Peter is released from prison. Paul starts out on both his first and his second missionary journey with the prayer of the Church. With prayer he appointed elders in the new churches. In prison Paul and Silas prayed and were delivered, and with prayer

he takes his farewell of the Church. In harmony with this history is the whole subsequent Apostolic teaching on the subject of prayer. Paul, for instance, gives specific directions as to the appropriate manner of prayer, and requires that it be "with the Spirit and with the understanding also," and makes it include joyous thanksgiving "for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." He himself is constant in his prayers for the churches, and in turn asks them to pray for him, and exhorts them to "pray without ceasing," and "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and for all that are in high place"; and "that men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without wrath and disputing." The directions of St James for prayers for the sick are too well known to need more than reference. This entire practice and teaching of the Apostolic Church but followed the example of the Old Testament Church and, in fact, of good men of all ages, and has its most complete justification in the example and teaching of our Lord Himself. He describes the true spirit of prayer as opposed to the ostentatious worship of the formalist, gives us a wonderfully comprehensive, spiritual, and appropriate form of prayer fitted to all circumstances and occasions in the public and private life of man; a universal prayer which the child may lisp and with which the saint may enter heaven. He gives us lessons of perseverance in prayer, and exceedingly rich promises of answer to prayer.

Finally, in all the great crises of His earthly life we find Him in prayer. When the shadow of the cross began to fall upon Him He spent all night in prayer. Before choosing and sending forth His disciples He went up into a mountain alone to pray, and the prayers of the upper chamber and Gethsemane are well remembered.

The Christian teaching as to the things for which we may pray is also very full, and in completing our view of this means of grace also attests its importance in religion.

The Sacraments.

From the earliest period we can trace the habit of approach to God by symbols. In the second and third chapters of Genesis two distinctive symbolic ordinances are set before us—one, negative, separating the unfallen man from sin, the other, positive, a means of God's gift of life. Each was associated with a tree of the garden.

In the Mosaic dispensation two such ordinances are again found—circumcision, a symbol of the putting away of sin, and the passover, through which their ransomed life was given to the Israelites.

Two such ordinances were instituted by our Lord Himself, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to these alone in Protestantism the term Sacrament is applied. The term is ecclesiastical rather than scriptural in its origin, and hence

cannot be defined by any higher than ecclesiastical authority. But the ordinances to which we thus apply it are distinctive ordinances with the following important notes:

1. They are universal, enjoined on all Christians.
2. They were established by Christ Himself.
3. They are symbolical of the two fundamental Christian ideas, the putting away sin and life by faith in Christ.
4. They follow in line from similar ordinances of the Old Testament.

These four distinctive notes cannot be applied to the five additional ordinances called sacraments by the Roman Church, Confirmation, Penance, Extreme Unction, Matrimony, and Orders. Hence these two stand out as the distinctive ordinances of the new dispensation, and are conveniently known as the Christian Sacraments or Mysteries, though both terms are of ecclesiastical rather than of scriptural usage.

Baptism—

This is a universal duty of the Christian probation. It is the outward and public profession not only of the putting away of sin, *i.e.* of repentance and conversion, but also of faith in Christ for the remission of sins, and in the primitive church was usually followed by the gift or seal of the Holy Spirit. From a single passage, John iv. 1, we may infer that it was already in use during our Lord's lifetime, though not by Christ

Himself but by His disciples, as a mode of enrolling or admitting disciples. Our account of the authority of the Master for its permanent institution as the ordinance of admission into the Christian Church, is in the words of the great commission as recorded by Matthew and Mark.

In the study of this ordinance we have three points to consider:

I. *The Nature of Baptism.*

A fundamental question has divided the Church from very early times. Is baptism primarily an ordinance in which God bestows or in which man accepts? Is it first expressive of our desire toward God a symbolic ordinance in which we publicly renounce sin, and consecrate ourselves to the service of God in faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and which is answered by God's blessing upon our faith? Or is it first expressive of God's relation to us, an abiding provision, a fountain for sin and uncleanness, which God hath set up in His Church, to which all may come and receive the gifts of God's grace? The answer to this question varies from the bare symbolism of Zwingli to the mystic grace *ex opere operato* of the sacramentarians. Doubtless each extreme includes an element of truth, and the most complete view of the truth in this matter may be gained from an induction of the New Testament teaching.

1. Baptism is commanded to the awakened and penitent who have yielded to their convictions. Thus at Pentecost Peter says to the

troubled enquirers, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus." It therefore expresses a state of mind or a spiritual act needed on our part in our approach to God; or a provision on God's part of His grace and salvation in Christ.

2. It is, on the other hand, presented as the voluntary desire of the penitent; so the Ethiopian eunuch requests baptism which is allowed on the condition of faith. This again may be regarded as a desire to express his penitent faith on the one side, or as a desire to enter into the blessings and provisions of the Gospel covenant of salvation on the other.

3. It is commanded as a duty to the Apostles. It is a part of their commission to preach, to teach, and to baptize. This certainly points to the view that in baptism there is maintained not merely an appointed mode of admission into the Christian Church, but also an institution which exhibits to the sinner and to the whole world God's act of grace in the forgiveness of our sins and the renewal of our natures by the gift of the Holy Ghost.

4. It is set forth as the privilege of the believer. Peter witnessing the results of his preaching to the Gentiles in their faith and the descent of the Holy Spirit, says, "Can any man forbid the water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" As a condition of their receiving remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, the ordinance here was unnecessary, for these they had already

received. But as the public seal of their reception into the fellowship of God's elect people, it was their privilege to receive this sacramental ordinance; and God had attested this by bestowing without it the inward seal of the blessings which it signified.

5. While it is usually followed or accompanied by the gift of the Holy Ghost, it is from this case clear that the two are not to be identified, either as synonymous or as cause and effect. This appears also from the instance of the Samaritan converts under the preaching of Philip, and of the twelve men of Ephesus. Other conditions than those implied in the outward ordinance of baptism were necessary.

6. Other references to baptism represent it as an act by which we die to sin, Rom. vi. 2, etc.; wash away our sins, Acts xxii. 16; Col. ii. 11, 12, and are admitted into the body of Christ or put on Christ, Gal. iii. 27, 1 Cor. xii. 13, this last not without the accompanying spirit.

From these passages it would appear that baptism, as the sacrament of cleansing and separation from sin through the atonement of Christ, sets forth both God's provision of grace and our act of laying hold upon that provision. As God hath established this ordinance in the Church, He publicly sets forth before all the world the provisions of His saving grace, whereby we may be cleansed from our sins. And as we avail ourselves of this ordinance either for ourselves or for our children, we publicly declare our faith in

the power of Christ to save us from our sins, and our submission of heart and life to be saved from sin. It is at once the symbol or outward form or embodiment of our act of faith and of God's act of saving grace. And wherever there is in the ordinance the inner spirit of faith there is also the inner spirit of grace.

This renunciation of sin is once for all, and hence baptism is but once.

II. *The Subjects of Baptism.*

All admit that adult penitent believers are proper subjects for baptism. This is already evident from the various New Testament examples of reception of the ordinance.

The question upon which the Church has been divided is, are children admitted? The passage in which Baptism is first introduced into the Christian Church at its very foundation seems to be conclusive on this point. "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." This is further strengthened by the mention of baptism of men with their house as of Lydia, the Philippian jailer and others. The general usage and ideas of the time, both under Hebrew and Roman law, would make this perfectly natural to and expected by

those to whom Christianity first came. Modern individualism was to them a thing unknown as breaking up the family into units. Both in religion and in civil status, to the Roman the family was one and indivisible. So to the Hebrew from the very foundation of the covenant of circumcision, the children had been admitted into the provision, and had received the sign of the Covenant. Under the Christian dispensation baptism is the sign and seal of the New Covenant as appears very clearly in Col. ii. 11, 12. To exclude his children from the New Covenant would to the Hebrew father be the occasion of such painful surprise, that the absence of any reference to such a difficulty is proof that it could not and did not occur.

The nature of the Sacrament further sustains this contention. It is the initial sign and seal of the New Covenant, in which we engage to separation from all sin and consecration to God, and God sets forth to us the covenant blessings of His salvation under the analogy of the Old Covenant, Col. ii. 11, 12. Into such a covenant it was perfectly competent for parents to enter their children under all the ideas of moral and legal responsibility prevailing at that time; and these ideas are fully supported by our best moral convictions to-day. More than that the religious faith of every parent lays hold of the covenant blessings for his children under the very impulse of renewed parental affection. It is to this feeling of parental love and faith that Peter appeals when

he says, "to you and to your children"; and the whole history of Christianity proves how powerful this religious affection and faith has proved in the Christian world. Corresponding to this is the covenant obligation enforced by St Paul to "nurture" our "children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." And we are admonished not to provoke our children "that they be not discouraged." So the children are exhorted to "obey their parents in the Lord," "for this is well pleasing in the Lord." The force of the expression here "in the Lord" can scarcely mean other than that Paul regarded these children as with their parents in the covenant of Christ's grace. By baptism they too had "put on Christ." The expression "nurture" speaks of them as babes, but it is "in the discipline and admonition of the Lord"; and the discouragement against which parents are warned is not discouragement merely in filial duty, but in that service which is "well pleasing in the Lord."

Finally, all this seems established beyond question by the Spirit and words of Christ touching children. He who said "Suffer the little children to come unto Me; forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God," and "took them up in His arms and blessed them," surely never intended to refuse to them the covenant privileges which they had enjoyed under the old dispensation, and the relations to religion which were acknowledged in all the heathen world.

The doctrine which thus appears to be un-

mistakably set forth in Scripture is upheld by the practice of the primitive Church. The earliest known controversy on the subject proves it then to be, not a new usage sought to be established, but an existing thing which some were anxious to abolish. This certainly places the burden of proof on those who deny children admission to the Church by baptism.

III. *The Mode of Baptism.*

The precise mode of administration has varied in the Church between immersion, pouring and sprinkling. The question is one of minor importance, but has received quite undue attention in later times. There is in Scripture no minute description of baptism, such as occurs in the ecclesiastical writers even of early times. Attempts have therefore been made to deduce a divinely authorised mode.

1. From the word *βαπτιζω* itself. The word *βαπτω* certainly means to dip or immerse in water or liquid, and hence to dye. *βαπτιζω* is the regular frequentative or intensive form, signifying to dip frequently, to plunge, or overwhelm or drown. From this came a secondary meaning to wash or cleanse, as that was commonly done by plunging in water, as is to be seen in many places in the old world still. From this the word came to be used of washing without much regard to method; and in this significance passed to the religious rite which evidently signifies a symbolic washing.

It is quite evident that in many cases this was not performed by immersion.

2. From the incidental expressions of Scripture. These again are quite inconclusive. Philip and the eunuch went down to or into the water; εἰς the preposition used may mean either, it is used after verbs of motion towards; and they came up from or out of the water, ἐκ being capable of either meaning. But under either significance, the terms do not imply immersion; and the catacomb pictures of the rite represent the baptized as standing in the water which was being poured or thrown upon his head. To the Scripture record the matter is thus one of entire indifference, something which it did not occur to the writers to mention. Hence here as in the Lord's Supper punctilious emphasis of form savours of mere ritualism, and is inconsistent with the free, spiritual, common-sense spirit of Christianity. The earliest ecclesiastical writers as the Didache favour liberty, varying the form to meet the necessity of circumstances.

The Lord's Supper.

Many of the fundamental principles of sacramental doctrine which we have already considered under baptism apply here. In the scriptural statements on the subject, we find the same prominence given to the human side as in the first sacrament. It is something which in its very institution we are commanded to "do in remem-

brance." Hence it is presented as an act of religious probation rather than as a mechanically operative channel of grace. But while we may avoid views that savour of occult efficacy from the mere outward performance of the act, as inconsistent with the moral and intelligent character of Christianity, we may yet in an intelligent probational sense regard it as an established channel through which God communicates grace, as well as an institution by which it is set forth to us.

As to the proper partakers of this sacrament, and even as to the essentials of its administration, there is, at least among Protestants, no serious dispute. All agree that those who by baptism have been admitted into the membership of the Church, and who worthily continue in that fellowship, are properly partakers; and that its outward form is the eating of bread and the drinking of wine, with remembrance of the words of Christ at the original institution and with eucharistic prayer. The inner spiritual significance of this act, as a form of service ordained for His Church by Christ Himself, may be gathered most clearly from the narrative of institution. This is given by Matthew, ch. xxvi. 17-30; by Mark, ch. xiv. 22-25; by Luke, ch. xxii. 7-18; and by St Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 23-25. In each of these passages the essential points are the same. The institution followed the annual Passover meal which Christ had just celebrated with His disciples. The Passover was one of the two fundamental ordi-

nances of the ancient covenant, neglect of which involved the extreme penalty, "He shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel." This of itself was most suggestive of the importance, the nature and the perpetuity of the ordinance.

From the record itself it is clearly seen that it is a covenant ordinance, a sign and seal of the New Covenant. "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, even that which is poured out for you." In one of the records "remission of sins" is expressly mentioned in connection with this covenant in the blood of Christ; in the others, it is implied in the expression which is poured out or "shed for you." The whole reference is to the ancient form of covenant sealed with sacrificial offering. The terms of this covenant we have quoted from Jeremiah in Heb. viii. 8-13. This epistle might very appropriately be called the covenant epistle, from the frequency and fulness with which it sets forth Christianity under this ancient form.

Again, in the words of Christ, it is a memorial ordinance. "This do in remembrance of Me." This was another link connecting it with the Passover; that too was a memorial throughout all generations. This is expanded by St Paul when he adds, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come."

The words of institution again present it as an eating of Christ's body and a drinking of His blood; "Take eat; this is My body." "Drink

ye all of it, for this is My blood." The interpretation of this language is given by our Lord Himself, John vi. 27-59, and is clearly to be understood not physically but spiritually. Paul unites the whole Church in this act, so that it becomes a "Communion," a partaking together of Christ, feeding upon Him in our hearts by faith.

On these three fundamental ideas of this sacrament St Paul and the Epistle to the Hebrews throw further light. Sin against this Covenant is most heinous sin. The Covenant sanctioned and sealed by the blood of Christ must not be broken; sin against it is death. It is trampling "under foot the Son of God," and counting "the blood of the Covenant wherewith He was sanctified an unholy thing," as well as doing "despite unto the Spirit of grace." So Paul warns us not to unite the Lord's table with that of devils; and that "Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord; and he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body." Hence the important injunction, "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup."

This sacrament thus stands before us as—

1. A solemn covenant act, in which God on His part sets before us the promises of His grace in Christ sealed to us by the blood of His Son, and we on our part enter into this covenant, solemnly witnessing it by the precious blood of the Covenant.

2. A perpetual commemoration of the death of Christ until His coming again.

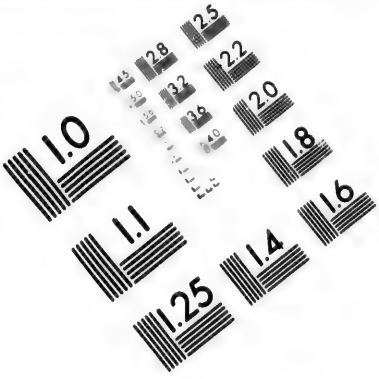
3. A solemn partaking together by faith of the grace that is in the Atonement.

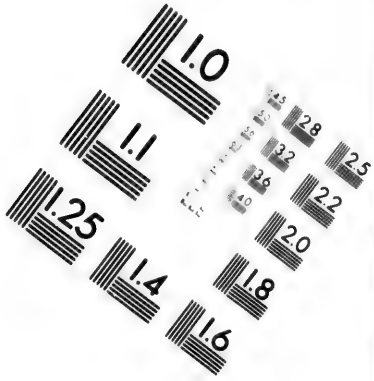
The Communion of Saints.

The sequel to the day of Pentecost is described in the second chapter of Acts as follows: "There were added to them that day about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the Apostles and the fellowship, the breaking of bread and the prayers." We have ventured on a little more literal rendering than even the Revised Version, using their text. Here, after the baptism of the three thousand, four things are mentioned as constituting their daily religious life. Each of these is used in a definite and specific sense. The Apostolic teaching became a regular institution or ordinance of the Church. So with the prayers which had already been so regarded in the Hebrew worship, where the daily hour of prayer was observed in the temple. The breaking of bread was not only a name for a Jewish meal, but became the designation of the Christian religious meal, "The supper of the Lord." The associated terms thus clearly indicate that the word fellowship also denoted a form of religious exercise common in the early Church. The word is used with the article, as in each of the other three cases, and would thus appear to have the same specific meaning. We have already

seen that the Lord's Supper is itself called a fellowship, but here it is designated by another term; and in the passage where the term communion is applied to it, it is with specific addition, "The communion of the body of Christ," a partaking together "of the Lord's table." But besides this specific application the term occurs several times in the New Testament in a more general sense, and yet specifically Christian. Paul addresses the Corinthians as called into the fellowship of God's Son. He thanks God for the fellowship of the Philippians in furtherance of the Gospel, speaks of the fellowship in the ministry to the saints, and also applies the term generally to common religious work.

The fellowship of the saints would thus appear in the Apostolic Church to be that unity first of spirit, then of acts of worship, and again of good works, which made their religious life a common one. This at times went even so far as the community of property in the things necessary for life. Unnecessary property was disposed of and charities were replaced by a common enjoyment of the needs of life from a common stock created by the contributions of all. It does not appear that the practice of the Apostolic Church took this form universally, or even frequently; but there was at least one conspicuous example of it in the primitive Church at Jerusalem. But while this temporal form of fellowship varied, the spiritual appears to have developed to a frequent means of grace. The Church assembled,





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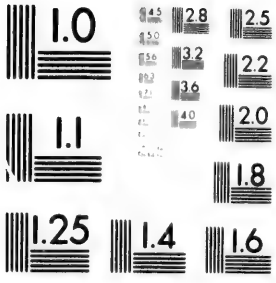

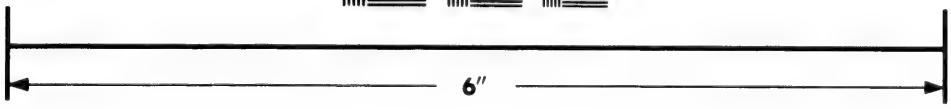

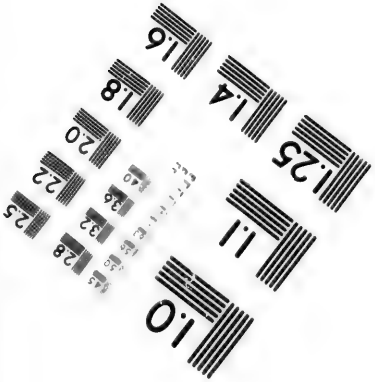

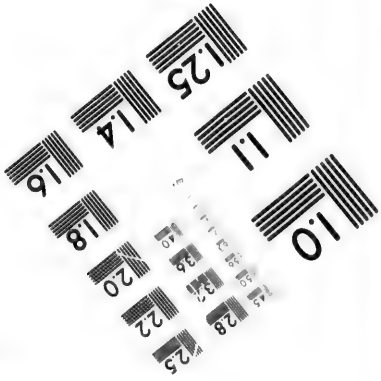

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not only to partake of the Lord's Supper and listen to the instructions of the Apostles, prophets and other teachers, and for united prayer, but also for mutual edification and comfort by means of psalms, exhortations, and the mutual contributions of their experience of the Spirit. This had become in the Corinthian Church not only an established institution, but had even deteriorated so as to require correction at the hand of the Apostle. It would appear to be this form of religious exercise, which was not unlike a part of the Jewish synagogue worship, that is referred to as "the fellowship" in connection with the other means of grace. It was quite distinguished from the formal Jewish exercises in which any member might take part, by the gifts of the Spirit, and especially by its warm religious affection and earnestness; and its usefulness as a means of grace depended most directly upon the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. In every age characterised by a revival of this power in the Church this form of religious exercise reappears in some form of societies or meetings for the more intimate spiritual intercourse of congenial spirits. It is the direct result of our social nature and of the eminently social character of Christianity, and vindicates its claim as a means of grace, not only by its existence in the Apostolic Church, but also by its spontaneous reappearance wherever an earnest and deeply spiritual Christianity is found. In the great revival of our own age it has played a most

important part, in various forms of assemblies for Christian conference and testimony, and in religious "retreats" and "quiet days," to say nothing of its more formal establishment in Methodism and the Society of Friends.

But it is a religious exercise which perhaps least of all will endure the touch of lifeless formalism. Its whole power lies in the genuineness of its emotion and affection, its hearty and spontaneous expression, and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in both speakers and hearers. These lacking, it becomes the most empty of forms, without even the merit of prepared intellectual excellence, and perhaps best serves the interests of spiritual religion by disappearing for the time from the stated exercises of the Church. This at least has been its history in the past; its perpetuity has been in direct relation to the continued presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER IV

THE LORD'S DAY

FROM the earliest times the requirements of all forms of religion have led to the setting apart of fixed days for public worship. These have been at the same time seasons of rest, or cessation from the ordinary employments of life, that all might have an opportunity for worship. The sentiment which so widely developed this usage in the very early history of our race is without doubt a right one, whether viewed from the moral or the religious point of view. Such institutions are the outcome of our deepest and truest moral and religious feeling, and are thus, apart even from the special light of inspiration, quite rightly represented as commands of God. The origin of the Hebrew weekly Sabbath dates beyond the remembrance of history. It is placed by their Scriptures as one of three laws wrought by God into His work of creation, the law of marriage, the law of labour, and the law of Sabbath rest. This representation is not a fancy or a religious myth, but expresses at once a physical, a moral, and a religious truth which the whole history of humanity has served to verify. As many of the old Hebrew religious ordinances were founded in physiological law, and

so confirmed their claim to be ordained of God, so especially these three laws. Among no other people were they developed to the same perfection of practical working as among the Hebrew people. While their marriage institutions were not yet perfect, as admitting though not encouraging polygamy and concubinage, they were far in advance of other nations, and make decided advance in the course of the Old Testament, until we find the prophets almost anticipating the perfect principle announced by Christ Himself. So the Hebrew Sabbath law indicates not only a high ideal of religious consecration, but also a deep insight into the moral principles involved, as well as into its industrial, social, and physical utility. The three principles involved in the Hebrew Sabbath law are these—

1. It is holy, *i.e.* set apart to God for His service and worship.

2. It is a day of rest. The law enforces the duty of labour. "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work." But it equally enforces the duty of rest. "The seventh is the rest of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work."

3. It is a day of rest not merely for each individual, but for the whole industrial or labour circle to which he belongs. His children, his servants, his cattle, the stranger within his gates, all have a divinely ordered moral right in this rest. The Sabbath law thus involved the subordination of all mere commercial or industrial

interests, and no one was more sensitive to these or valued them more highly than the Jew, the subordination of these to the right of rest of his own body and mind, and to the same Divine right of all who shared or performed his labour, down to the very brute beasts themselves. It thus involved the broad principle of the rights of labour over man's natural and lawful desire for gain.

This law was enforced by the consideration of two great facts in nature and history. First, in nature, God works and rests. The account of Creation itself was shaped to emphasize this fact, and so enforce the law upon the minds of the Hebrew people. Again, in their history, their whole nation had once been in industrial bondage. They should therefore never forget the weary heart of the slave and the stranger.

But the Hebrew law of the Sabbath while thus founded in the grandest and most universal of religious and moral principles, and while most beneficent in its spirit, was in its Hebrew development turned aside from its purpose. Like the whole Mosaic dispensation, it tended to rest in the letter, even to the sacrifice of the Spirit. Minute rules for the observance of the Sabbath were enacted; the penalty of Sabbath breaking was death, and our Lord Himself narrowly escaped being stoned because He had healed a sick man on the Sabbath day. Against the entire spirit of this narrow legalism our Lord protests when He says, "The Sabbath wa made for man,

and not man for the Sabbath." He likewise proclaims the subordination even of this ancient, honoured, and most important institution to the demands of the new religious age and spirit which He came to bring to the world. "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." As a consequence of this incurable imperfection into which it had fallen, and of the utter incompatibility of the Pharisaic idea of the Sabbath with the new Christian spirit, we find quite early in the history of Christianity, the Jewish Sabbath sharing the fate of the other Jewish institutions which, decaying and waxing old, were ready to pass away. Paul as the leader of the new ideas especially recognised this. Where the old observances did no harm he quietly permitted them or even conformed to them, but where they served to reintroduce the old spirit of legal bondage, he hesitated not to speak out most distinctly. "Let no man judge you, in meat or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a Sabbath day, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is Christ's." The men who observed the old ordinances were not to be harshly condemned, unless, as in the case of Galatians, they had fallen back from grace into legalism; but the new spirit of the Gospel would create its own body, its own expression of the Christian spirit.

Thus it was that quietly, as the Kingdom of God which cometh not with observation, the Lord's day replaced the Jewish Sabbath, repre-

senting the more perfect moral and religious conceptions of the new faith. There is no formal enactment or precept; we simply find the first day of the week early in the Apostolic history as the new day of Christian assembly. About A.D. 59 or 60 this day was already so established in the Church that on it at Troas Paul meets the disciples to break bread, and preached till midnight, ready to depart on the morrow; and to the Corinthian church he gives direction, that on the same day they should make their collection for the suffering saints at Jerusalem. A little later the revelator speaks of the same day as the Lord's day. Thus quietly, like every other external or formal institution of the infant Church, the new day grew up with the new sacraments, the new ministry, and the new church, under the inspiration and guidance of the spirit of new life. The outward fact which selected this day was doubtless the Resurrection. It thus, like the Hebrew Sabbath, became a commemoration of a most Christian event.

It now only remains for us to gather up the new Christian ideas of the nature and obligations of the Christian institution. These we may readily gather from its relation to the old law, and to the new religious faith and ethical spirit; and more directly and particularly from the words of Christ and His Apostles.

1. As historically and *de facto* the Lord's day has in the Christian Church replaced the Jewish Sabbath, so, like every other new institution

occupying such a relation, it embodies and continues the great fundamental moral and religious elements of the old Sabbath. These we have seen to be religious worship, rest from labour, and the calling to halt of the entire industrial spirit, that all men, and even the very cattle, may enjoy this right of rest from labour, and of worship of God. Historically and practically the Lord's day in these three respects stepped into the void left by the desuetude of the Jewish Sabbath with its other institutions. As Christianity, like Judaism, recognised the obligation of public assembly for the worship of God, so this became the day of such assembly. And as such assembly required rest from ordinary work, so this became the day of such rest, and as Christian parents and masters desired their children and household to enjoy with them the privileges of the Christian worship, it became the day and means of recognition of their rights of rest and worship.

2. At the same time, while inheriting and continuing the moral and religious spirit of the old day, the new day was completely free from all the narrow ritual, legal, and technical ordinances which hedged around the old day, and made its observance a burden, which even conservative Peter says, "Neither our fathers nor we were able to bear." It was no longer a day of punctilious scruples as to whether it be right to do this or lawful to do that; all these had been swept away with the spirit of legalism. Wherever possible it called its people to the assembly with a glad

heart of willing worship. For this purpose it was a privilege as well as a duty to lay aside the labours of every-day life; and with glad spirit the rights and privileges of worship and rest were accorded to all. But there is no hint that the new day laid a legal burden on tender consciences such as had for ages been imposed by the old. Any such thing in the circumstances of the infant Church would have been fatal if not monstrous. The great majority perhaps of the early Gentile Christians were slaves in the households of heathen masters. To them came no day of rest or privileges of worship. But to add to their privations the sting of a guilty conscience would have been abhorrent to the very spirit of Christianity. On the other hand, they were taught that to the eye of God all days and times and places were alike; and hence, if in the order of His wise providence, their lot fell in slavery, the service of the heart took the place of the outward assembly. And if for their weary frames came no day of rest, there still remained a better rest for the people of God. To their broader Christian view all time is God's and is holy; and all work is rest when done for Him and with His peace in the heart. The new law of Christianity was thus a law of liberty and not of legal scrupulosity and quibbling with conscience. But at the same time its moral condemnation rested severe as ever upon the man who honoured not God in his day of worship, who robbed his own life of its portion of rest and communion with God, and who robbed his fellow-men

through greed of gain or lust of pleasure, of their rights of rest and worship.

The Christian Sabbath, for the old term is still applicable, ours too is a rest, thus stands out on the broad platform of religion, justice, and mercy. Its obligation is not any arbitrary command or even positive precept, but great moral principles. Its observance is not in the letter of legal ordinances, but in spirit and in truth. It is itself a necessity to religion, a boon to toiling humanity, a bulwark to all good things, and a strength to national life and character. In the highest possible sense we can apply to it our Lord's words, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath."

It may be asked what is the relation of the Lord's day to otherwise lawful recreation and amusement? From the moral principles which we have had before us the answer is very easy. If the Lord's day is the day of worship, the riot and physical toil of public amusements or private recreations is by that very fact excluded. Communion with nature, converse with friends, quiet restful contemplation are all in harmony with its spirit and institution. But to the true Christian spirit the question cannot arise, can I devote part of my Sabbath to the sports and amusements of modern life? Every one of its three fundamental moral ends would be violated by such a practice. It is no longer the Lord's day, *i.e.* the day of religious life, nor a day of rest, as all will know who have watched a weary crowd returning from

a show, nor can it do other than seriously infringe the rights of rest and worship of a large number of our fellow-men whom we employ as the servants of our pleasures. The relation of the Sabbath to legal enactment is a distinct question rather of jurisprudence than of religious ethics. Religion certainly cannot be enforced by law, and spiritual Christianity never can encourage any attempt in that direction. From the side of jurisprudence on the other hand, it may reasonably be held that the law has a perfect right to protect, especially working people and the Christian public generally, from the encroachments of a mercenary and irreligious spirit upon the people's day of rest and worship.

DIVISION VIII
THE CONSUMMATION OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM, AND THE LAST THINGS

CHAPTER I

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

CHRISTIANITY was from its very foundation far more than a system of doctrines representing individual and personal religious faith. It was also far more than a discipline of personal perfection of moral and religious character. It was again far more than an organised form of united worship of God, whether national or ecclesiastical. From the very first its field of view was world-wide and age-long. These thoughts are now so familiar to us that we can with difficulty conceive of their unfamiliar and startling aspect, when first introduced to the world. Men so lived within their own narrow circle, and so despised the outside world, were so occupied with their personal and national ambitions, and so indifferent to those of their fellow-men except as linked with their own, that a sympathy which embraced all humanity and a hope which reached out for humanity through all the ages, was, outside of true religious faith, a thing unknown.

Even to-day the best that the philosophy of history can give us is the idea of an evolution slowly but surely moving toward perfection. But from the very beginning all these things were fundamental and familiar elements of the new Christian faith.

The language of Christ Himself is everywhere the language of a universal sympathy, a universal responsibility, and the certainty of a universal triumph. No two things can present a more striking contrast than the narrowness of the Jews of His day, and His own universalism. It is not only that His moral and religious principles were so perfect as to admit of universal application, though that is true and is a most significant fact. But He founded those principles on the idea of a Fatherhood universal and impartial as the sunlight or the falling of the rain; and He commanded a love as wide as that of this Father in heaven. And He makes the coming in of the Kingdom of this Father the subject of universal prayer.

Again in His teaching there was the most absolute effacement of all class distinctions and artificial boundaries which divide men. He knew men only as men and in their moral character and needs. Even the distinctions of kindred were effaced in His deeper view of these universal interests of men as men. These principles are especially conspicuous in the parables of the Kingdom. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; and the field is the world; and the

good seed, these are the sons of the Kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy that soweth them is the devil; and the harvest is the end of the world." The grain of mustard seed and the leaven afforded other illustrations of these ideas. We meet them again in such expressions as, "I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto Me"; and in His teaching of the universal resurrection and judgment. Finally His last words, and His commission to His Apostles set them forth in unmistakable terms.

The Spirit of Pentecost was equally universal; it was a pouring out of the Spirit of God upon all flesh, and it at once founded the Church with a world-wide ambition, responsibility and faith. Peter's narrower ideas would indeed have made this faith impossible of realisation, but he himself was imbued with the faith nevertheless; and with Paul came the wider and more perfect doctrine of Christ which knew in Him neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female, barbarian nor Scythian, but regarded all as one in Christ Jesus.

Out of such a foundation there early arose in the Church a firm faith in a glorious consummation of the Kingdom, as well as a deep sense of responsibility and enthusiasm for its advancement. Our Lord Himself had dwelt more largely upon the difficulties of its progress. Like a wise leader, He did not underrate the opposition to be overcome, or lead His followers to expect an easy victory. He prepared them for labour and conflict, and even for persecution and death; but

laid upon their consciences the responsibilities of duty, and sent them forth to be heroes and martyrs, with hope only in God. But as under the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit the harvest of the world seemed to be at once coming in, and the Gospel swept its way out through the nations of the Roman Empire, reaching its far confines even in the Apostolic age, their hopes grew very high that the consummation of Christ's Kingdom was near at hand. Our Lord Himself had refused to dwell upon this topic as something which the Father had not put into His human ministry, and which was still hidden in the counsels of God. To their crude and earthly conceptions it could not yet be revealed. But Paul saw clearly that the conflict with evil was not yet ended, that the power of evil was still entrenched in the vast Roman Empire, and that this man of sin must be revealed, before the triumph of the Spiritual Kingdom. A little later the Book of Revelation unfolds this great opposition in its successive stages, and expresses the faith of the Church in the final triumph of Christ's Kingdom of truth represented by the New Jerusalem, descending from heaven.

The faith thus early developed never left the Church. It has often been sadly perverted in a way to thwart the very consummation after which it aspired; but either in degenerate or in revived Apostolic form it has survived the centuries.

In its Apostolic form this faith involved the responsibility of Christ's commission to carry the

Gospel to all the nations. Christ Himself had said, "This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come." And so in answer to the question, "Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" He said, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father hath set within His own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." In both these passages the coming of Christ's Kingdom is implicitly associated with the supreme duty and work of His Church for which the Holy Spirit gives power. Perhaps the most significant and promising sign of our own age is the hold which this duty has taken upon the heart of the modern Church, and the fact that to-day in almost every nation the Gospel is preached at least in some measure.

This Apostolic faith also involved an unceasing conflict with the great powers of evil in their varied forms, resulting in their final overthrow. It is only in the first passage last quoted, after the tribulation of this conflict in which the followers of Christ shall be hated of all nations for His sake, that the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in heaven. Paul at once foresees and describes this conflict. "It will not be except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth

himself against all that is called God or is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." And this "mystery of lawlessness doth already work, only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to nought by the manifestation of His coming." These passages when interpreted not as mere pictures of the imagination, but as presenting in figurative language the generalisation of great historic facts, call up the unceasing battle of the Church with error and sin in their entrenched institutions in the world's political, social, intellectual, and industrial life.

Again this faith embraces the coming in of "the fulness" of both Jew and Gentile. As held by Paul it expects that "all Israel shall be saved"; and "if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" This fulness of the Jews he expects when also "the fulness of the Gentiles is come in." It is well to notice the terms used by Paul. They are not absolute, and are quite in harmony with his ideas of individual responsibility and freedom. But they express a firm faith in the salvation of the great majority of the race, "the fulness" of both Jew and Gentile, and in the high perfection and spiritual power of the Church, new "life from the dead," and in the glorious regeneration of humanity, "the riches

of the world." These all go together, spiritual life and power in the Church, numbers saved, and all the institutions of human life purified and glorified.

Lastly, this is itself the coming in of the Kingdom, and the Lord's coming again, for which we pray. The mistaken visions of our day of a material coming and an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem are based upon the same literalism and materialism and secularism which characterised the Pharisees in our Lord's day. They held fast to the prophetic and Messianic faith, but so deformed it that when He came they knew Him not. So to-day when the morning dawn of the Millennium is already upon us, and its early rays should be a trumpet call to the Church to perfect the things that remain, and not by idle waiting, but by energetic work to bring in the coming of the Lord, and to wait for Him clad in the spotless purity of holy life, and decked in all the glorious fruits of the fulness of the Spirit, it would indeed be a sad mistake if we stood idly waiting for lights in the sky and a visible descent of Christ from heaven, and a material presence on earth and a royal court at Jerusalem to accomplish the work which can only be accomplished by the proclamation of the truth in the power of the Spirit. Thus alone will come the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Let the whole Church pray, "Thy Kingdom come"; and all the world respond, "Amen: come, Lord Jesus."

CHAPTER II

DEATH AND THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

THE four remaining topics of theology are usually embraced under the designation of eschatology or the doctrine of the last things. They follow the soul of man departing this life into the unseen world. They deal with death and the separate state, the resurrection of the body, the final judgment and the eternal states.

In entering upon these topics we may note—

1. That only great principles linking these things to present life and duty are presented in the Christian faith. All mere gratification of curiosity is excluded by the very nature of the revelation. If it were a mechanical revelation working *ab extra* by occult processes, then it might like modern spiritualism profess to answer any question. But working in conscience and religious faith through the historic facts of human life and history, it must link all our faith or hope or fear of the future with the actual facts of the present. What goes beyond that is the mere play of the imagination.

2. That the faith thus revealed is not only held in closest practical relation to the facts of the present, but is expressed in language

borrowed from the things of time. This is the only language which we understand at present, and hence the only possible form in which these thoughts can be clothed. But we should keep strictly before us the fact that now we see through a glass darkly, and that here religion may easily be reduced to superstition by the error of a literal and materialistic interpretation.

3. That the silence of the New Testament is to be noted, as well as its direct teaching. Any attempt to break that silence by forced interpretation or by invented additions is useless.

4. That here the analogy of faith in the past unfolding of spiritual things is specially useful.

Death.

The first step into this beyond is death. There can be no doubt that even to Christian faith this is something abnormal, something from which we shrink as from pain. Hence to Paul's religious insight it is the result of sin, "death by sin," and "the wages of sin is death." Hence it is something not so much to be glorified and transformed into an entrance into a higher life, as something to be abolished, conquered, put under our feet. Christ hath "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel"; and through Him, "Death is swallowed up in victory." Even the sufferings of this life do not to the Christian make death

in itself desirable; it is only the higher state which lies beyond which is to be desired; "not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life." That which Christianity does for us in this life is to deliver us from the fear of death. It makes us forget the momentary pain in the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It forgets death itself, thinking only of the things on each side; "to depart and be with Christ" which would be for me "very far better," or "to abide in the flesh which is more needful for your sake."

As presented in the New Testament death includes—

1. The dissolution of the body. It is thus to Paul the decaying of the outward man, the dissolution of the earthly house of our tabernacle, to Peter, the putting off of this tabernacle. But it will be seen that each one of these terms implies the superiority of the Spirit, and that in this the true man, the inner man or the hidden man of the heart consists. Hence—

2. The separation of the Spirit, its "departure," and its passage into another form of existence known in theology as

The Intermediate State.

The terms by which this new state of existence is described are quite varied, but all except one borrowed from without. It is in the New Testa-

ment generally termed Hades, the place of the dead, the term used by the Greeks for the same purpose and by the Hellenistic Jews to translate the Hebrew *Sheol*, which expressed the same idea. It is also called Paradise, a term borrowed from the Persians, and which found its way into the Jewish religious vocabulary after the Captivity. Both these terms illustrate the broad unity of religious faith in some of these fundamental conceptions. Two other terms are peculiarly Hebrew, one "Abraham's bosom," used by our Lord belonging to the later Judaism, and the other "gathered to his fathers," used once by St Paul carrying us back to the earliest period of the Hebrew faith. Finally Paul gives us an expression absolutely and uniquely Christian, "being with Christ" or "with the Lord," founded perhaps on our Lord's own words in His Passover discourse, "I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

These terms are themselves not without significance. The first points to the mystery of death—it is the entrance to the invisible or shadowy world. But all the others express a positive religious faith which links this present life with that to come. This faith is very much enlarged by other New Testament expressions, in which it more fully appears. From these it appears as—

1. A state of real continued existence. Certainly the parable of the rich man and Lazarus,

in which our Lord sets forth the common Jewish faith of His time with a strong ethical application, at least implies this. So especially our Lord's words of encouragement to the thief on the Cross. Again, His argument in reply to the Sadducees, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," is most direct and conclusive here. One cannot avoid the conclusion that He believed in the continuous life of the soul. The words which we have already quoted from St Paul lead to the same conclusion.

2. A state of conscious existence. This is, perhaps, as much implied in the words just referred to as continuous existence. Paul's being with the Lord and his "very far better" both imply this; and even the Jewish Paradise includes as much and more. The same is presented in many beautiful passages in Revelation. The souls under the altar waiting and praying are not represented as being in an unconscious sleep.

3. A state of rest, *i.e.* not of cessation from all activity, but of release from the struggle and toil of probational life. Hence probation must be completed and its responsibility discharged before "the night cometh, when no man can work"; and "the dead which die in the Lord" "rest from their labours" and are "blessed" "for their works follow with them."

4. Hence not a probational state, which always implies effort, striving, the toil and labour of life, and is rigidly determined by works. "Before the

judgment seat of Christ each one shall receive the things done in the body."

5. Already a state of separation between the righteous and the wicked. Each at death goes to his own place. This belongs to the very heart of the parable of Dives and Lazarus, which may thus be taken as our Lord's assertion of this doctrine. Already the great gulf is fixed.

6. Hence to the righteous a state of blessedness and to the wicked of torment. The blessedness of the righteous is even indicated as the fellowship of the holy; they are with their fathers, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but above all with Christ.

7. But yet even to the righteous an imperfect state: hence one of longing and waiting. Paul expected his perfecting at the resurrection, and the souls under the altar cry, "How long?"

8. Hence one which may include development, not probational, nor yet purgatorial; there is no New Testament expression looking to either of these; but as the seed which grows to its full perfection of new life. This seems implied if not expressed in Paul's faith. It is the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth in us which shall quicken our mortal bodies into the resurrection of life. Hence the body which grows from this resurrection seed will be not a "psychical body," but a spiritual.

9. Hence in 1 Thess. iv. 13, etc., Paul seems to think of this life as apart by itself, waiting and

perfecting for its season at the coming of the Lord. In such a state may, indeed, lie the equation of the probational advantages of this life, not as a new or an extended probation, but as the unfolding of that which only began here. Something of this seems to be implied when it is said that we to whom come the advantages of the fulness of the Kingdom shall not precede, or have the advantage of those who have been long dead in Christ; and also in the fact that this hidden life is still in the unity of the Church and of Christ.

10. This life ends with the resurrection and the final Judgment.

The Old Testament Doctrine of a Future Life.

Before considering the final elements of the Christian doctrine of a future life, it may be well to consider very briefly the Old Testament doctrine on which it is built. That such a doctrine exists we think quite certain, notwithstanding recent doubts on the subject. The later writers are quite definite, even to the extent of a future judgment following the resurrection of the body. Passages like 2 Macc. vii. 9, 11, 14, etc., show that these at least in a general way were elements of the later Jewish faith. Daniel xii. 2, 3 carries this faith back to the later canon, and possibly Job xix. 25, etc., and Isa. xxvi. 19, Eccles. xii. 14, carry us further still. They all imply at least

the conception of a resurrection of the body and a future judgment.

But the more general idea of a continuance of conscious existence after death and of a place of such existence apart from the grave seems to have been an element of the Hebrew faith from very early times. It is doubtless to the credit of the Hebrew religion that on this point it was by no means as far developed as the religious faith of neighbouring peoples. This is probably due to the fact that it held so strongly to the common-sense foundation of historic fact, and did not allow the imagination large play, even in the expression of religious faith, much less in furnishing its content. If, however, we examine carefully its use of two terms, we can scarcely doubt that they are used with a general faith in a conscious future life, and with an idea of a definite place of such continuous existence.

The first of these is "hereafter." Into this word is put the very strongest moral significance. That significance, which is the very kernel of the doctrine of a future existence, is asserted in full consciousness of what appear to be the moral inequalities of this life. "I have seen the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a green tree in his native soil." "But one passed by, and, lo, he was not, yea, I sought him but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the latter end (hereafter) of that man is peace." It is scarcely possible to

assign to this statement of faith a significance equal to the enthusiasm of its expression unless we carry the "hereafter" here set forth beyond the grave.

This is still more clearly the significance from the very form of expression in the proverb, "The wicked is thrust down in his evil-doing, but the righteous hath hope in his death." Hope in death must either itself take hold of a future life, or at least imply a state of being from which our conscious interest continues in the things of this present life.

The second term is Sheol. That this term is frequently used for the grave is quite evident. And so in many cases escape from Sheol is not a resurrection from the dead but escape from death itself. But while we may admit this, there are other passages in which the word seemingly cannot be otherwise used than as the place of conscious existence beyond death. Isa. xiv. 9, etc., presents an exceedingly highly wrought picture of this kind which certainly contains the conception, even if we do not affirm that it asserts the doctrine.

Again, the hope expressed in Ps. xlix. 15 can scarcely express other than a hope of a future life with God. "God shall redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for He shall receive me." It will be seen that this is not a mere escape from death. The Psalmist is rather asserting the universal dominion of death. Of men even the greatest he has just asserted: "They are ap-

pointed as a flock for Sheol, death shall be their shepherd." "But God shall redeem my soul," etc., not that he too should not die, but "God shall receive me." There is surely in this a hope almost Christian in its character, though yet so dimly expressed.

CHAPTER III

THE RESURRECTION AND THE JUDGMENT

OUR review of the Old Testament doctrine of the future life makes it clear that even in the view which religious faith takes of death and the intermediate state which lies immediately beyond, Christianity had made large advance upon the ancient Hebrew faith. Death, while still maintaining its stern severity, is completely conquered by the power of this new faith, and the life beyond becomes illuminated by the presence of Christ and the society of the blessed, until we are quite ready with Paul to say that He hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. The New Testament writers are quite conscious of this change with its enlargement and clearness of vision.

But the advance made by the Christian faith is still more conspicuous when we consider the remaining topics of this doctrine, especially the resurrection and the general judgment. This advance is not altogether without preparation. In the period between the close of the Old Testament Canon and the coming of our Lord, the Jewish conception of these two doctrines had become more definite, and the doctrines

themselves more prominent than we find them even in the latest books of the Old Testament. This prominence and definiteness our Lord fully maintains. But besides this, He both corrects and enlarges the doctrines, placing them upon a completely ethical and spiritual basis, especially stripping them of the notions of exclusive Jewish prerogative which had attached to them.

1. As against the Sadducees He asserted in direct terms the reality of the resurrection, linking it with the general doctrine of immortality and the future life which He asserts as an essential part of the Old Testament faith. "God is not the God of the dead but of the living," for all live to Him. If then He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as Moses asserts, they still live to Him. Another current error which our Lord corrects without even mentioning it was the idea which seems to have found place in some quarters that the resurrection was only of the children of Abraham, whom they believed to be alone the true heirs of the Kingdom of God.

2. This He corrected by asserting in the strongest terms the universality of the resurrection. "The hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." This Paul puts in the language of the teaching of the Pharisees as "a resurrection both of the just and unjust."

3. He claims the resurrection as especially His

own work, a part of the mediatorial authority or power which He had received from the Father. Hence He says, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doth," and "As the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son also quickeneth whom He will." Paul's statement of this is full of interest. "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

These definite teachings of our Lord are both illustrated and attested as truth by His raising of the dead during His life-time. In fact some of the most remarkable sayings which we have quoted were directly connected with the raising of Lazarus. They were likewise attested by His own resurrection in such a way that Paul makes it the very pivot of Christian faith, "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain."

To the words of Christ Paul adds two thoughts:

1. The resurrection is through the inworking of the Holy Spirit. "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." That the body is built up by the inner life is a profound truth of science as well as of theology. Paul does not apply it to the resurrection of the wicked though it doubtless has its application there as well.

2. The resurrection body thus created anew by the Spirit of life is fitted for the life that is to be. Hence for the new life of the spiritual world it is an incorruptible, glorious, powerful and spiritual body, a body fitted for the perfect life of the world to come. Hence though all may not die "we shall all be changed," and this mortal put on immortality.

Two points much discussed in modern speculation, and apparently one of them mooted in St Paul's time, are not definitely settled by any New Testament declaration.

One is the question of material identity. This was a part of the old Egyptian faith, hence their care in the preservation of the bodies of the dead. The tendency of Paul's teaching is to regard the question as of minor importance. He falls back on the analogy of living nature. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat or of some other kind, but God giveth it a body, even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own." The identity is thus placed in the life and not in matter or even form. Both may be changed with the necessities of new conditions. Paul's method of dealing with this question is remarkably suggestive and instructive. Even his religious faith follows the facts and laws and suggestions of God's world around us as the safest answer to our questions. The passage should be interpreted in Paul's free common-sense spirit.

The other is the question of a first and a second resurrection.

Our Lord in His teaching refers only to a general resurrection of two classes: "They that have done good unto the resurrection of life," and "they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." We have already seen that the faith of the Jewish Church first of all apprehended the resurrection of the just, and that when our Lord came there was still difference of opinion as to the resurrection of all. This His teaching met fully, but He has said nothing that would give ground for the distinction of a first and a second resurrection. Paul in one passage says, "the dead in Christ shall rise first"; but he is comparing them not with the wicked but with the saints who are still alive and who shall with them be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." Neither here nor in 1 Cor. xv. is he giving special and separate consideration to the resurrection of the wicked. The doctrine can thus be founded only upon the twentieth chapter of Revelation, which does indeed speak of the first resurrection and the second death. But in a book so largely metaphorical in its language and tropical in its entire presentation, including even the general outline of structure of the book, it would be exceedingly dangerous to found a doctrine upon a literal interpretation of a single passage.

The Judgment.

The doctrine of a general and final judgment following our Lord's second coming, the consummation of His Kingdom, and the general resurrection, has from the beginning formed a most important and influential part of the Christian faith. Doubtless figurative expressions setting forth this faith have too often been transformed into sensible material fact; but the reality and substance of the faith has been maintained even under these materialised forms. Of the substantial Christian faith in the judgment as a fact there is no need of proof. Paul's one word is sufficient. "We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ." It is only necessary to determine as far as may be the contents of this faith.

1. It is a judgment by Christ at His coming. In interpreting this it must not be forgotten that of His first coming He also said, "For judgment came I into this world." And of this judgment it is said, "He that believeth not is judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil."

2. The judgment is thus a moral discrimination of life and character in the light of truth. "He that rejecteth Me and receiveth not My sayings hath one that judgeth him; the word that I spake the same shall judge him in the last day."

3. It will be universal and individual. We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the "things done in the body according to what he hath done whether it be good or bad."

4. It will separate all men into two great classes, the good and the bad; but the absolute position of each individual will be in strictest justice "according to his works."

5. The judgment will be a final demonstration to each individual conscience of his true moral relation to God and right. The presentation by our Lord in Matt. xxv., the parable of the virgins, the parable of the talents, and the judgment scene all unite in this element. There is in the light of this judgment no longer possibility of self-deception.

6. The judgment will be a new and final manifestation or appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, perfecting His Kingdom and revealing His glory. It is nowhere said that this coming again will be in the flesh, or in material and bodily form; but it is declared to be in glory and with power, and with all His holy angels, the ministering spirits of His Kingdom. All these may have a purely spiritual significance and may disappoint our earthly conceptions, but the result shall be the final moral demonstration of the rights and wrongs of all time and of all men, and an absolute and final determination of true moral relation to God.

CHAPTER IV

THE FINAL ESTATES

If we have rightly apprehended the moral significance of the great judgment, it is in itself the culmination and the termination of probation. If probation is at once a development of moral nature and a testing of its will, both proceeding by increment of moral light until the maturity of full responsibility is reached, then such light as the judgment day will throw into the conscience of every man, searching the thoughts and intents of his heart, and concentrating the testing light of moral truth upon every act of his life, must end all probation by declaring where each man stands before God. And if we have understood the nature of probation and its relation to the moral nature of man, then a probation in which the full light of moral truth, and the full power of Divine grace have been together brought to bear upon man for his development and his testing, must result, whether for good or ill, in such maturity as becomes in its very nature an unchanging and unchangeable condition. He that is holy must be holy still, and he that is filthy must be filthy still. This is the awful responsibility of moral nature. Like God or like devil

we must become. Such is the voice even of reason founded upon the facts of our moral nature and history.

But the moral and religious faith of Christianity has grasped this truth in another form; and declares simply as a matter of religious revelation that the final estates are eternal, and in their nature incapable of change. For the righteous there is reserved "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away"; while for the wicked they may even in this life reach such moral maturity of wickedness by sinning against light and knowledge, that "it is impossible to renew them again to repentance"; while of the state beyond it is still more positively asserted that "their worm dieth not and their fire is not quenched." The final states are eternal and immutable.

With reference to the positive character of these states only great moral outlines are given; and that often in figurative language which it would be a serious mistake to interpret literally as some have done.

Perhaps the most serious of all declarations of the eternal state of the wicked is the word of our Lord, "eternal sin." This shuts out both annihilation, for sin is positive activity in evil; and future hope, for the sin is eternal.

The religious side of this is a state of wrath. The indignation and wrath of God is declared against every soul of man that doeth evil. The wrath of God is a fearful conception, but one

which every moral being must face as a part of the very responsibility of his moral nature.

Perhaps the most common term to express it is "death." "The end of these things is death." This is "the second death." Here again to base speculation upon the physical meaning of this term would be a most serious mistake. The New Testament gives clear examples of the use of this term to denote a state of separation and alienation from God; and such seems to be its meaning here. Again, it is a state of suffering penalty. It is "the vengeance of eternal fire." It is suffering "punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of His might."

Finally, it is a state of unutterable suffering. To express this the New Testament exhausts the vocabulary of pain, both in its physical and mental forms. A deeply religious spirit alone can interpret their meaning without suffering their power, as it stands with exceeding fear in the presence of a holy and just God.

From the terrible contemplation of these awful possibilities it is a relief to turn to the other side of the picture, the future state of the holy, that for which alone God made us in His own image.

Here again the New Testament uses only ethical and spiritual terms. Keeping this future state in closest touch with our present probational life and relations to God, and never for a moment stepping aside to answer speculative or curious questions.

To the aged Paul, after a life of the most active and perhaps the most faithful service ever rendered by a saved sinner, this future presents itself as "the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that love His appearing." This crown is laid up for such as love the manifestation of right and truth by the righteous Judge, and who, out of a pure conscience can say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

And yet from the other side it is "eternal salvation" of which Christ is "the author." Hence even in heaven the song is "Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour, and glory, and blessing"; and again, 'Salvation unto our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb." And as such "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," it is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away," upon which we are to enter at the last as the children of God. The promise of this "eternal inheritance" we have received through "the Mediator of the New Covenant." These aspects are purely religious, they spring from our relation to God in Christ.

Another conception of it embraces both. It is a sharing with Christ in His glory, and in His sufferings. As children we are "heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with Him that we may be also glorified

with Him." Our Lord's presentation of this is one of the most touching love: "Father, that which Thou hast given Me, I will that where I am, they also may be with Me, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." He had already promised "I come again and will receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

From this again it is an easy turn of thought to His words of sentence in describing the judgment of the great day: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The final consummation is the unity and perfection of what Paul calls God's purpose or plan of the ages, through which He brings many sons unto glory, crowning them on the throne of the universe, with glory, honour, and immortality. In heaven and on earth, in time and in eternity, there is nothing higher than this Divine image and likeness to which we are restored in Christ. It alone is blessed of the Father. It is in itself as from God, by the knowledge of God, in His likeness, eternal life.

Such is a very feeble presentation, not of a science of theology, but of the leading elements of the RELIGIOUS FAITH which we call Christianity, from Him who is at once its author and its central element. If even imperfectly we have shown that faith to be a harmonious and consistent unity, fitted to the moral and religious

nature of man, and taking hold of that nature with a Divine power of spiritual life; if we have shown it to be founded in facts of nature and history as revealing God, and neither irrational nor unreasonable, even where it transcends reason and science, but in remarkable harmony with the spirit of both these products of our intellectual life; above all if we have even partially succeeded in pointing out that this body of truth which we call religion is to be received not blindly as dogma imposed by authority from without, nor yet discovered by the observations of experience and the processes of reason, but entering the soul as a living conviction full of light and life and power, the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, and if we succeed in turning any of our readers away from the obscuring mists of modern controversies to this pure light of truth which shines within, then to God be glory and praise both now and for ever. Amen.

THE END

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